

THE
ART AND PRACTICE
OF SKETCHING



JASPER SALWEY

Leek

High



School

Year IV B

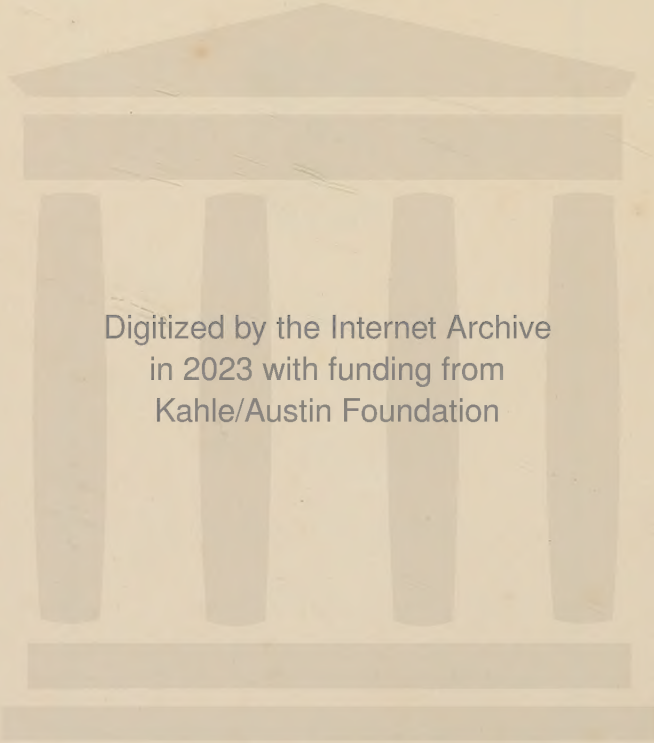
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Published by

B. T. BATSFORD LTD., 94 HIGH HOLBORN
LONDON.



SKETCH IN WATER COLOUR BY J. S. SARGENT, R.A.

THE ART AND PRACTICE OF SKETCHING

ITS HISTORY AND TECHNIQUE IN ALL MEDIA

BY

JASPER SALWEY, A.R.I.B.A.

*Author of "The Art of Drawing in Lead Pencil," "Sketching in
Lead Pencil for Architects and Others," etc.*

WITH A FOREWORD BY

LEONARD SQUIRRELL, R.E.

LONDON:

B. T. BATSFORD LTD., 15 NORTH AUDLEY STREET, W.1

FIRST PUBLISHED 1930

MADE AND PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN
FOR THE PUBLISHERS, B. T. BATSFORD LTD.,
BY J. J. KELIHER AND CO. LTD., MARSHAL-
SEA PRESS, LONDON

FOREWORD

By LEONARD SQUIRRELL, R.E.

FROM both a literary and an informative point of view it is a difficult task for me to write here anything useful on the subject of sketching, for Mr. Jasper Salwey has covered the ground so admirably and exhaustively that he almost renders a foreword superfluous. I welcome, however, the opportunity of emphasising his central and recurring theme, i.e. the great importance of the "sketch" in the developing history of art, and the vital need for the modern student to be continually sketching—and *still* sketching.

This is not a volume of dull and passionless information, an exposition of a few pet methods of technique; it is by no means an ordinary text-book, but an illuminating and understanding survey of an immense subject—a subject which makes a great claim on the attention of all who are interested in living and potent Art.

As it is unquestionably Nature which inspires the entire expression of man—for even his imaginary world is derived from the concrete world around him—so must the inspired vigour of a sketch, created whilst *en rapport* with Nature be more expressive than a slowly evolved and considered "finished work" as we generally term a studio production. To deal with sketching is to deal with the essence of creative art, and in this volume Mr. Salwey has realised, and risen to, the bigness of his subject. Even in the midst of practical discussion of the various media and their uses, there runs, persistently, an imaginative understanding of its æsthetic aspects.

To those who are acquainted with his previous books, uniform with this one, viz. "The Art of Drawing in Lead Pencil" and "Sketching in Lead Pencil, for Architects and Others," it will come as a revelation to find that he can write as well and as usefully on a multiplicity of media as he has done on the use of lead pencil alone. On the latter he has become an authority, and his own work in pencil illustrates very adequately his appreciation of its wide range of possibilities. It is interesting to know that he has personally essayed the practice of the various media mentioned in these pages; therefore he writes as a practical worker, and not merely as a critic.

This book is compiled, like the other two, for the benefit of students, and for the support of true Art. In a time when "stunting" in art is increasingly a temptation, it should do definite service in bringing home to its readers the need of continual sincere contact with Nature as the fountain-head of pictorial inspiration. Its survey of the diligent and unremitting toil of the early masters—toil enthusiastically embraced for the primary purpose of acquiring knowledge and power—should prove inspiring and energising to students and artists alike.

Although, in these days, the production of very involved finished paintings, such as elaborate historical scenes, or subject pictures, has almost disappeared, I feel that we sometimes err in swinging to the opposite extreme, assuming that the slightest and most fragmentary study is worthy of a place on the wall of an important exhibition. It may, indeed, be so in some cases, but a real danger lies in too readily giving a disproportionate value to transitory sketches or studies, and neglecting the discipline of "fighting out" the full area of a larger and more considered finished work. We should not, and Mr. Salwey stresses this maxim, lose sight of the fact that a sketch is primarily a means to an

end. When we sketch, we seek to re-create a pulsating and intimate contact with Nature, but we cannot capture to the full, immediately, every quality which we observe: colour, form, tone, movement, composition, etc. It is in the carefully contemplated finished work that our several sketches are co-ordinated and refined, and in which we can add our personal message to what Nature has said to us.

In vitality and freshness of statement, however, the sketch has generally the advantage, and this quality constitutes its greatest claim to serious recognition. How fascinating and deeply satisfying masterly sketches are! We range with delight over the names of men—old and modern—who have placed a treasury of inspired work before us. Rembrandt, who stood supreme in his power over both line and tone, and who always said something virile and instinct with life even in his most hasty note; Turner, with his versatile frenzy; John Sell Cotman, with his vision of large and noble masses; Constable, who captured the unceasing movement of sky and trees with a sparkle and vibrance hitherto unknown; D. Y. Cameron, imbued with the grandeur of his solemn Scottish hills; Muirhead Bone, superb in draughtsmanship, revealing the beauty of buildings in our day. How long could not this catalogue be continued?

Mr. Salwey reviews the masters in intriguing detail, and the various media in which they worked with very practical helpfulness. My hope is that students of pictorial art may find their fingers itching beyond their usual wont as a result of reading this book, and feel impelled to sketch more seriously and assiduously than ever before.

PREFACE

THE main object of this volume is to encourage the practice of sketching, a practice which has already performed a function of vital importance in the development of graphic art, and which must continue to do so if the future is to produce achievements comparable with those of the past. An attempt has been made to supply an outline of the methods proper to the various media, and a brief review of the work of the great masters of the past and of the present day who have employed them with distinction. It is hoped that the student who is earnest and determined, and who regards Art as a serious and noble occupation, and also those of the general public who desire to view its manifestations with a deeper understanding, will find something more in these pages than a mere restatement of what is common knowledge, and perhaps a point of approach which will reveal new aspects of the subject.

Whereas in my other two books in this series, *The Art of Drawing in Lead Pencil* and *Sketching in Lead Pencil for Architects and Others*, I have confined myself to the study of this single medium, in the present work I deal with all the media possible of employment in sketching. The connection I claim, however, between this and my previous books is that they are compiled—for what they may be worth—for the benefit of students and for the support of true Art at a time when support is so often given to Art which is not true.

In the selection of the illustrations I must acknowledge my indebtedness to the following artists who have most kindly placed examples of their work at my disposal, viz.: Dame Laura Knight (Plate 1); Mr. Charles Harrington

(Plate 15); Sir H. Hughes-Stanton (Plate 16); Mr. I. M. Cohen (Plate 17); Mr. Leonard Squirrell (Plates 18, 35, 36, and 37); also to Messrs. Bemrose & Sons, Ltd., of Derby); Mr. Harry Watson (Plates 26, 27 and 28); Mr. J. K. Popham (Plate 38); Mr. Teng H. Chin (Plate 46); Miss Marjorie Brooks (Plate 47); Mr. Clifford Hall (Plate 47); Mr. Frank Emanuel (Plate 48); Mr. Cecil King (Plate 51); Mr. Sydney R. Jones (Fig. 2 and Plate 55); Mr. Lewis Baumer (Figs. 3, 4 and 5); Mr. Robert Morley (Figs. 6 and 7); Mr. N. H. J. Baird (Plate 60); and Mr. J. Littlejohns (Plate 64). The frontispiece, from a drawing by the late J. S. Sargent, R.A., is from the collection of Miss Emily Sargent, by whose kind permission it is reproduced, and the example by Mr. Frank Brangwyn, R.A., on Plate 51 is from the collection of Mr. Charles H. L. Emanuel, and is included by his courtesy. For the subjects on Plates 12, 32 and 33 I am indebted to Mr. Hans Heysen and the proprietors of *Art in Australia*; for that on Plate 2 to the proprietors of *Old Master Drawings*; and for the top subject on Plate 34, from *Highways and Byways in Leicestershire*, to Mr. F. L. Griggs, A.R.A., and the publishers, Messrs. Macmillan & Co. Plates 30, 31 and 63 are reproduced by permission of the Imperial War Museum, London, while the remainder of the illustrations have been selected for the most part from originals in the Victoria and Albert Museum, British Museum and Tate Gallery, London.

J. S

March 1930

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THE ART AND PRACTICE OF SKETCHING

CHAPTER I

THE ART OF SKETCHING

AMONG the innumerable activities of man in the realm of Art, the sketch holds a position of marked importance; for apart from its use as a mere preliminary practice or note, adopted by artists as a preparation for the fully developed picture, it is often of such a high order as to be, even when considered only as a sketch, a work of art in itself. The very fact that the term is understood to define a spontaneous and rapid delineation of a subject, limiting both time and labour, precluding premeditation and subsequent touching up, concentrates the artist's whole ability on this one direct effort, during which there is time for no extraneous thought to impede him or detract from the clarity of his achievement.

When we stand alone before a sketch and comprehend it, we are perhaps nearer to the artist than we could be in his living presence. Whether it be a rendering in pencil or crayon, water-colour or oil, or any other medium, the artist has expressed himself without the embarrassment of doing so personally; he has told us about himself, and we know not only of him but of Life.

If it had been the custom for artists to withhold any but their finished works from public exhibition, it may safely be said that pictorial art would have lost a large measure of the enthusiasm and appreciation that it has received from later students and connoisseurs. The astronomer's

calculations, the engineer's graphs, the scientist's experiments, are secrets of the workroom and the laboratory; even the architect's sketch plans are seldom on view—a fact to be deplored. But the sketch-book of an artist has always been considered among the treasures of its possessor, and the sketch, even when known to have been produced as a step towards the accomplishment of a finished picture—a means, in fact, to another end—is recognised as being in itself something of special value and appeal; of such interest, indeed, as to have resulted in its housing, exhibition and preservation in collections and public art galleries, and, even more, its marketing at prices equal to, and sometimes surpassing, finished works of art.

The practice of sketching cannot be said to have been concomitant with the dawn of pictorial art. Early Art was approached through drawing, delineation and study, without the added aid of sketching. The very nature of the early pictures, mural decorations and frescoes, conceived to fill prescribed spaces or panels, conforming largely to the prevailing convention, and concerned with the arrangement of figures and a comparatively limited range of subjects and treatment, did not demand preliminary experiment and trial as have the later developments of Art. The idea was evolved in the process of drawing, rather than from a pre-stated sketch of the completed panel.

As Art became increasingly emancipated, the practice of sketching as a preliminary to work on a large scale began to be recorded in histories of the early Italian masters. Such early masters as Giotto and Fra Angelico made little drawings on parchment, which are in the nature of sketches, and Masaccio in silver point on tinted paper. It was Andrea Mantegna who first carried the practice much further, sketching objects and sometimes complete subjects of peasant life direct from nature, bringing to notice the beauty of the real as beside the classic, thus moving the Art of his country into a new phase which was to be



INK SKETCH BY REMBRANDT



realized in all its fullness and splendour by Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, and Michelangelo.

The Renaissance was, to a large extent, an unshackling of the chains of convention that weighed the artist down. A new race of artists appeared who, in the enchantment of this golden age, realised that Art was an end in itself, worthy of the pursuit of a lifetime, and revelled in their freedom to pursue it according to the call of their own spirits. A new beauty seemed born into the world, and in the magnificent outburst of pictorial art that ensued we find the sketch playing no mean part. The very fact that such a legacy of sketches has come down to us from this period goes to prove that the artist himself must have had a sufficient realisation of the quality of these works, and an appreciation of what they represented from the fact that he preserved them at all and did not throw them away on the completion of his picture as an author might discard his preliminary rough notes.

From the hand of Leonardo da Vinci may be seen some of the earliest pen sketches, though his more usual medium was silver point. In them we find a new note of action and emotion over and above the mere power of depiction which is so evident in them. Thus was the practice of sketching leading Art onwards into a wider field which found so magnificent a culmination in the work of Michelangelo, whose extensive use of sketching in various media reveals to us perfectly the means by which he approached the problems of his profound achievements.

Sketching had become a practice of the Venetian School no less than of the Florentine. The sketches of Titian in pencil and ink are evidence of his belief in the value of rapidly rendering the interests of nature and life. The fast perfecting medium of oil-colour may also have been employed for sketching by this school, if not by Titian himself at this time, though there is no direct evidence that this was the case, even at a period when such strides were

being made in the employment of rich colour in portrait work.

Dürer, who by some is considered the first great painter of landscape, visited Venice in 1506, and he, among others, may have been the means of conveying something of the Southern method to Northern Europe, though the influence he brought was Florentine rather than Venetian. Dürer made numberless interesting sketches, many of which are still preserved, though these works are really more in the nature of close studies than of what may be truly defined as sketches, his usual medium being colour and ink.

The Baroque style which followed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries saw the first general realisation of the function of the sketch as we understand it nowadays. The new school sought to emancipate itself from the somewhat severe forms of the preceding century, to dramatise, as it were, the subject-matter of pictures, and excite the mind and the eye by an added exuberance of form and violence of movement. The innumerable sketches which come down to us from this epoch perfectly express its artistic ideals. Here we find a more varied use of media and a new variety in their combinations. There is an added virtuosity in technique and a serious endeavour to add to the means of expression at the artist's disposal. Men such as Caravaggio, Guido Reni, the Carracci, Tiepolo (see Plate 66) knew well how to seize the impression of an instant and perpetuate it in a rapid, vigorous, if sometimes over-violent sketch. Though the artistic achievements of this age cannot be compared with those of the epoch preceding it, it may at least be said that it witnessed a definite advancement in the art of sketching, and the first signs of appreciation of the sketch as a work of art in itself, distinct from the drawing or painting.

In the work of the Dutch and Flemish artists to which this brief outline now brings us, Art is seen to range over

a far wider field. The two men who stand out most prominently and demand a student's attention are Rembrandt and Rubens. A wonderful range of studies, sketches and notes by both these masters has been collected in England alone. The medium most usually employed in the case of the former was pen, in that of the latter charcoal. Both individualists indeed, facing tradition but looking beyond it, they attained to almost unique achievements in the field of Art, and those who would trace to its source the realism of the modern landscape, as differentiated from the classic, must look back to Rembrandt, while the sketches alone of Rubens, quite apart from his finished works, are in themselves an education to the student of figure drawing.

Rembrandt occupies a unique position in the history of Art, for it was he who above all other artists understood and made use of effects of chiaroscuro and light. It has been said indeed "that he painted in light," and this singular luminous quality is to be found in his sketches, many of which were made as a preliminary to etchings. Rubens, too, executed thousands of sketches, many of which remain to the present day, in a great variety of media. They stand as models of what such sketches should be, full of vigour and action, conceived with a virtuosity and a sureness of touch that amazes us to-day. "It was his recreation to create works," Taine, the great French critic, said of him, and indeed such was his mastery of the "language" of sketching, that he appeared to work with no appreciable effort, to be able to express perfectly what he saw about him in sketches that stand supreme of their kind.

Sketching is a practice which by many is associated almost entirely with the open air, where its joys as well as all that it has to teach may be discovered. The act of sketching, however, does not necessarily imply an open-air practice. One may make a sketch, as differentiated from a drawing, indoors in the studio or anywhere; and, quite

apart from the methods of any particular artist, the benefit of occasionally limiting the period of study to a rapid sketch has long been realised in art schools. It is an excellent practice for the student to be for ever sketching everything that appeals to him at any time or place, and setting down the visions of his imagination in miniature sketches of compositions and design. Turner was once identified by a native of Yorkshire as "the little man who always had a pencil in his hand."

It may be said that sketching for the sheer joy of sketching or in an experimental way for more ambitious work came into practice in England with the general revival in the appreciation of Nature towards the close of the eighteenth century. In this curiously sudden reaction from classicism a new world was revealed to the artist, who found on all sides a popular demand for the representation and portrayal of the country-side. The demand for landscapes in the classic manner had subsided; pictures regarded more as a stage for the representation of temples, heroes, maidens, myths and the varied properties which the fashion of seeing Italy and Greece had cultivated, were on the wane. Taste and fancy took a new turn, and "the earth was regarded as the scene of man's existence rather than the stage of his imagination."¹ Draughtsmen even set out to explore England for crumbling buildings, ruined Gothic architecture, and subjects of like sentimental appeal. Homely scenes and local colour, cottage and farm, field and woodland, were seen in a new light.

Gainsborough and lesser men of his time abandoned the Dutch influence and took to sketching familiar scenes of English landscape. Its sentimental appeal was too strong for it to remain unrecognised even when rendered in monochrome, but Cozens appeared and developed the practice of painting in water-colour and, though his comparatively primitive methods of tinting over a monochrome basis gave

¹ Cosmo Hamilton.



CLAUDE LORRAIN

SKETCH IN INK AND WASH



his work only a limited semblance of reality, the exhibition and circulation of such pictures doubtless fashioned a fondness for the scenes portrayed.

The first love of landscape and English country life is probably traceable to Gainsborough and Cozens, who abandoned conventions and went out to sketch what they saw and found on every hand. It is more than likely that their choice of subject was a subconscious response to the demand of the age, but this response brought about the development of sketching as we know it to-day. A knitting together of a whole range of new objects not hitherto commonly introduced against a landscape background became a necessity of the picture.

It is then obvious that it only needed the full development of water-colour as a rapid and comprehensive medium finally to establish the practice of sketching in the open air, and to begin its long history up to the present time, when often, alas, the carrying of a colour-box and camp-stool is an all too popular hobby! A development of the new medium soon resulted through its employment by a few English draughtsmen of this period, Alexander Cozens, Hearne, Malton and others; and it was they who also helped to lift painting from the merely topographical to the pictorial, a process ultimately completed by Girtin and Turner.

But though the dawn of the nineteenth century saw water-colour established in England as a definite medium and a very dexterous art in itself, its special facility did not blind artists to the particular advantages of other media. The use of ink line with a monochrome wash was popular, and was very successfully employed by Edward Dayes and others, whose work doubtless influenced Turner in his extensive use of this medium for sketching; brown and even red ink being effectually applied, especially on grey paper. It was Girtin, however, who did perhaps most to advance the practice of sketching, working in various media

and over a wide range of subjects. He even formed a Sketching Society, which had among its members John Sell Cotman—who ultimately became its president. Although lead pencil did not come into general use for finished drawings until the early nineteenth century, Girtin employed this medium with power and confidence, as the illustration on Plate 50 well shows, and it is more than likely that its particular advantages for sketching—responsiveness and rapidity—were soon widely appreciated for experimental purposes.

Armed with this new choice of media the artist set out to portray at will both fact and fancy, and by the process of either systematic or spontaneous sketching to increase his powers as well as greatly to widen the horizon of pictorial art. To these sketching media Turner added direct sketching in oil-colour, and among his achievements in this manner—one of which is to be seen on Plate 11—are examples of all that, it seems, a sketch should be.

The several forces already at work in the process of developing the new and English art of water-colour were soon stimulated by a new group of artists, eager to pursue and develop it, endowed indeed—some of them—with a genius to practise it with masterly freedom. John Varley, William John Müller and Peter de Wint stand out especially. The work of these men should be closely studied by the student who seeks the elements of weight and force in his work, and particularly the work of Müller, who, perhaps more than any other man of his time, not only understood the great value of direct sketching in the open, but actually practised it with great ability in water-colour and in oil. David Cox is said to have watched with amazement Müller's dexterity and confidence when sketching in oils, and to have added power to his own work thereby.

But all the artists of this period, the late eighteenth century and early nineteenth—and there were a number who were greatly accomplished besides those whom we have



J. M. TURNER

SKETCH IN WATER COLOUR



Below Handy Cross. Oct. 19. 1861.



J. D. HARDING

AN IMPRESSION OF A PASSING EFFECT, RENDERED IN CARBON PENCIL STUMP



mentioned—proved instrumental in revealing some new aspect of the fast developing art of landscape; each experimented in some hitherto untried technique, leaving the knowledge of the subject fuller than he had found it. The many wonders of treatment and technique which it was now realised might be embodied in a rapid sketch entirely established the fascination of this pursuit, and revealed even more far-reaching possibilities in pictorial art.

The chief problem that these artists were seeking to solve, either consciously or subconsciously, was, doubtless, that of tone values. In monochrome it had proved difficult, but the adding of colour to weight was found to render it doubly so. Often at that period perfect tonal value was achieved, notably by Cotman, by Girtin and de Wint, and in France by Corot, but in the period which links that day to the stronger work of the present century this problem seems too often to have been neglected.

The practice of sketching continued, but like so many practices of the Victorian era it became meticulous and sentimental, altogether too popular. For when a practice or a task is considered a necessity of curriculum it is taken less seriously, and an appreciation of its true purpose and value is likely to be lost. The Victorian period is, however, a mine that should not be left unworked by students of Art simply because so much that is narrow and sentimental attaches to it. The process of digging will be rewarded by fine veins of ore; for in these days strove a number of lesser masters, the excellence of whose work is only now being brought to light by cultured enthusiasts. Curiously enough it is often the prettiness and sentimentality of their finished works which has kept in the background the fine qualities and innate Art of their sketches, which, when discovered, display over and over again the spontaneous beauty that the practice of sketching engenders. Stoddard, Westall, Birket Foster, Marcus Stone may be considered too sentimental at their best, but their sketches should be seen, while

the sketch-books of such artists as W. R. Beverley, Harding and Sir John Gilbert are a revelation. Neither are the lithographed sketches of Isaby, Decamps and others by any means to be despised.

In thus briefly reviewing these facts as they bear upon the practice of sketching, surprise is doubtless occasioned at the smallness of the world of pictorial art even at the dawn of the nineteenth century in England. But it *was* a small world, for at that time a very few artists lived and worked whose pictures and sketches are now considered worthy of praise and preservation. Among those few pioneers were, through the medium of Dr. Munro's Academy, a sprinkling of patrons, connoisseurs and one or two little societies, nearly all known to each other. The publication of sets of drawings of architecture and landscape found, of course, a certain public, but the output, as compared to the present time, was extremely small; the actual buying of pictures, unless steeped in the obvious and the sentimental, being very limited, while any general appreciation was as almost nil. Pictures painted abroad were being purchased by the wealthy. The vanity of human nature kept portrait painters employed and, even as to-day, drew fashionable people to the Academy. But who knew of Cotman, of Old Crome or of John Thirtle? Who knew what Cozens and Knight produced when they visited Italy, or of Turner's amazing output of sketches? Who knew what Müller, Cox or Copley Fielding sketched when they went off to North Wales? Their relatives perhaps, and a few personal friends, here and there a patron; beyond these probably no one.

The celebrated Norwich School founded in 1803 was the first real art coterie ever formed in this country, and the little meetings at "The Hole in the Wall" tavern were as one star on a dark night. The boundless enthusiasm which must have urged these artists to continue in their efforts to produce real works of art when the popular demand was for topography, common objects and everyday scenes,



CONSTABLE

DIRECT OIL SKETCH



is indeed amazing, but still more amazing is the isolation and loneliness—in regard to recognition—which must have conditioned their sketching as only a preparation for ultimate pictures, the call for which they knew was exceedingly rare. Yet their productions have seldom been surpassed!

The peculiar conditions under which the artists of this period studied and strove to express themselves amidst an unknowing public may be the very reason why achievements resulted which are still considered—apart from all sentiment regarding them—to mark the highest standard of attainment in this country. This point is not put forward in order to suggest that an artist, to be great, is best unrecognised in his lifetime, but it is set down as a thought for the student who may be relying too much on general recognition for the stimulus to proceed. As to whether an artist would, or even could, continue to proceed if no single soul applauded or no other man understood, is an exceedingly interesting question. Though an artist may know intuitively when he has produced something of great merit and value, and dispel any sense of loneliness by reason of this knowledge, even the smallest hint of praise from someone of his own world may be doing more for him than even he knows, pervading the firmament of his own outlook with a light that to him is life.

The early men had at least their few friends and associates who were brother-artists. Cozens found enterprising men like himself to accompany him on his visits to Italy. Girtin and Turner were close friends in their youth and worked often together. Cotman had certain pupils and patrons and was, while in London, surrounded by artists who to some extent realised his powers. Crome and his circle doubtless gained spiritual support from one another, just as we see that they influenced each other's style and methods, and actually aided each other in times of want with the material means with which to "carry on."

The depth and extent of man's observation and his

ability to express the visible world are as clearly evidenced in pictorial art as in literature. The wonderful sketches and studies which are to be viewed in this country alone must impress even the uninitiated or the most casual observer, and be, in themselves, a revelation of the subtlety, variety and infinite wonder of Life. The study of this vast range of taste and talent is alone a liberal education.

It is not to be supposed that artists have worked in most cases because the world looked on. Records and history tend to show that the fount of inspiration and desire has risen rather from the artist's own being; that his sketching and drawing and painting have been of his own ordering; that in some cases artists have stood so firmly on their own ground as to act, to work and to live so independently of convention or precedent as to have created a world of their own which defies the historian of Art who would attempt to reduce all to a tale of simple evolution.

Art must be approached at the will of the artist for its own sake. To discern and preach this is surely the first duty of an Art master. Fully to realise this must surely be the Art student's thought on the threshold of the magic world into which he proposes to venture.

In other countries, notably France, where at this time the more frequent introduction of the figure in themes elegant and fanciful, in which landscape was merely a fantastic background for the more emphatic interest of the figure, direct sketching in water-colour or oil was not pursued to the same extent by artists contemporary with the men whose work we have just reviewed. But what is interesting is that because the incident rather than the mass was the main motive, and because costume, property and the grouping of figures in elegant compositions was the vogue, the medium was rather chalk and crayon than the brush. These sketches, sometimes on tinted papers touched with body colour, sometimes in red chalk, sometimes in



HANS HEYSEN

AN AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE SKETCH
IN CHARCOAL AND BODY COLOUR





A. R. SMITH

SKETCH IN WATER COLOUR



black, are wonderfully vital and attractive and are, it must be admitted, often more important than the finished canvases for which they were considered merely a preparation. Examples by Watteau are here illustrated (see Plate 24). In each is expressed not only the refinement of the artist's sensibility, but the elegance of the world in which he moved, and each is an example of how such can be conveyed even within the limits of a sketch. Such artists as Fragonard, Chardin, Lancret, Greuze, working on the most varied subjects, favoured, when they sketched, red chalk or sepia wash, and expressed themselves in manners most masterly in these simple media.

The French Revolution and its influences brought about a complete change in the conditions under which Art was practised—in that whereas Art had previously been in definite demand by the aristocrats, under the new régime a demand was practically, for a period at least, non-existent. Artists strove on to express their ideas and realise their aims, and though few took notice and even fewer purchased, the traditions were not lost and the accumulated knowledge of method, pigment, medium and technique was fortunately preserved.

Corot, who during his sojourn in Italy had acquired a taste for certain characteristics of the classic subject, on his return to his native land set out to paint new subjects in a new way, and this, being based on the transitory effects of light on landscape, was very dependent on sketching. The great technical problem which he set himself, and which he so wonderfully mastered, required constant approach through experiment. Millet, a great master, an individualist who lifted himself out of his early struggles with the problem of living; Millet, who reflects so intensely those realities of his time which had remained constant though obscured through the elegancies and refinements of the pre-Revolution period, who throws us back in so startling a way to the realism of Rembrandt, wrought

out his masterpieces by sheer study and application. Who can believe that "The Sower," "The Grafter," or "The Gleaners" are not the results of years of sketching of action, and of commune with the facts of Nature and Life?

To return again to our own land and time, should we be able to glory in the genius of Sargent, to enjoy the illustrations of Grieffenhagen, the portraits of George Henry, the draughtsmanship of Augustus John, the brush-work of Orpen, to marvel at the etchings of Strang and Rushbury and Griggs, or delight in the liveliness of Shepperson and Baumer, the decorative charm of Cayley Robinson's idylls, the confidence and ingenuity of modern water-colours, but for the practice of sketching which lies behind these later achievements?

In thus reviewing the matter it will be seen that even from the time of the Italian masters painters have employed and developed the practice of sketching, as differentiated from drawing or the making of studies, as a distinct branch of their work, and have not only found pleasure in it for its own sake, but have thereby greatly increased their knowledge of the scope of Art and realised a fuller development of their aims. The sketch, as a note or as a microcosm of the picture, has been the means of recording an idea or an inspiration, which, during the preparation and processes attendant upon the commencement and working out of a large canvas, might all too easily be lost. Those moments of vision and moods of exaltation and enthusiasm which distinguish the true creative artist from his fellow-men are so precious to himself and to the world that they must find some rapid recording medium: to the writer a few hurried notes, to the musician a few bars upon a score, to the architect a plan in miniature of a building, however immense, to the artist a sketch.

Just as the discovery of any expeditious means of approach to a great end—short cuts in fact—has its



SIR H. HUGHES STANTON

DIRECT SKETCH, IN OIL COLOUR

attendant dangers and disadvantages, the development of the practice of sketching has, in recent times, lured the dilettante to regard it too much as an end in itself. One hears the expression "he or she is fond of sketching," a not altogether ill-placed fondness perhaps. But would that this fondness were more often regulated by a certain earnestness as well! Sketching is one of the most pleasurable of hobbies, but its invention and its use is rightly not a hobby but the stepping-stone to an aim,—and an aim is something much worthier than a hobby. The mind is sometimes relaxed, even doped, by hobbies; by aims it is strengthened and ennobled. To study what others have done is a most delightful and enlightening occupation; to embark on an attempt to do likewise is at once to support a great responsibility, is to venture into a country where many claims have been staked out, where pioneers have left landmarks to be revered, where mere mimicry is not flattering, and multiplicity but a burden. It is the old question of quality and quantity. It can never be said that Art is not in need of quality, but by mere quantity Art is often killed.

Men inherit talents, show particular abilities, choose professions, follow the craft of their fathers, and thus turn the wheel of the world; but the engineer having assayed a little music, or the station-master become rose-grower, do not necessarily demand a platform and a Press. Yet sketches which are sheer amateurish effusions may fill galleries primarily intended for the exhibition of serious works of art, and newspapers devote columns to mere idle untrained effort. Because this state of things exists the sketcher, in purchasing his paint-box, should realise the tremendous weight of responsibility which this act implies, and the still more tremendous significance which should centre in the yet bolder act of exhibiting his productions.

But a still far greater danger to the well-being of Art lies in not sketching at all, in covering large canvases with paint and extensive blocks with water-colour before the

fundamentals of all pictorial art have been realised, or any knowledge has been acquired of how to handle pigments. A great deal may be discovered if the simple practice of sketching in a small compass in various media be taken up in a serious and persevering way, and the great aims and achievements of Art are held in view and made to put something of humbleness, something of reverence, into even the most gifted and precocious of beginners.

Because alluring materials of every kind fill out the shops of artists' colourmen and every fancy of the prospective sketcher is catered for, the practice of sketching merely as a pastime is not to be wondered at. A display of unused colours and a new sketching-block are very beguiling. The merest novice may purchase a telescope and peer at the most distant star and continue nightly to do so, but he is really very far away from becoming an astronomer. A sketch may be great art, but the practice of sketching is primarily the means of approach to Art on the grand scale.

It is difficult to trace the exact origin of the psychological bias which first gave rise to the recent desire to return to the Primitives rather than to continue to evolve from the Impressionists. What concerns us here is that modern Art often lacks that very quality which has undoubtedly been achieved in other times and other manners through the practice of sketching. Much modern work is heavy, weighted down by self-consciousness and often utterly devoid of any properly developed technique, rather than uplifted by spontaneity of both thought and rendering, which sketching cultivates. Also even a highly-finished work that is based on a sketch will convey life and inspiration and be more vital than a painting pieced together and patterned from a collection of detached studies or so produced as to appear a mere exercise in the representation of a collection of facts, before the sum total of the effect of these facts has been realised as a single vision, tried out in a sketch and their "relative" rather than their "absolute" value arrived at.

For this is indeed what the artist is teaching himself by the practice of sketching. He is finding where to lay emphasis, where to surpass, where—perhaps—to eliminate altogether; he is, in fact, discovering the secret of all great pictorial art—relative values.

To call a spade a spade or to paint a chair as a chair may be significant of vigour, but in Art more is demanded of the artist than a display of vigour. If Art was a display of force, if Art was realism, if it was just one simple matter to which the physically robust and the daring, though otherwise undeveloped, might attain, it would not hold the place that it does among the works of man, or have evoked the vast literature which exists concerning it.

Art is not so much concerned with the statement and rendering of facts as with the relation of facts, their part in a subject as well as all the technical problems involved in employing a medium in the right manner to achieve a pictorial result; and this understanding of relation is the one which sketching cultivates in that it tends to develop a power to comprehend the whole rather than to concentrate unduly upon the part.

A subject of great profundity arises from the study of sketches by great masters, and that is the relationship of the mind of the artist to Nature. Does the artist see Nature as representing the ideal, or does he see even beyond Nature? Stimulated by what Nature presents, does he conjure a world even more wonderful, responding to some influence from the very soul of things? It may at least be thought that often he does, and that in the rapid process of sketching a world even more marvellous—the world of his vision—is recorded, every form translated, every effect intensified by reason of some secret power and virtue, inherent in the depths of his own being.

Turner's topographical subjects are often not possible of identification, so loaded are they with objects and ideas

of his own invention. His pictures were often merely stimulated by the actual subject he set out to paint, but that is all. The rest is a dream, an echo perhaps, of Claude and the Arcadian School. The delight in a certain decorative loveliness which characterises some of the best of present-day pictorial art may be a sheer emanation of the artist's mind, a manipulation of the aspect of Nature and things, or result from the voices of the *Anima Vita*, the sub-conscious soul of the world. The artist, attentive, sensitive, hears and is moved by this inner beauty which must manifest in his work.

In like manner it may be observed, by a study of the sketches forming the illustrations to this book, that whatever may be his conscious point of approach the practice of sketching will tend rather to emphasise the artist's own response to æsthetic emotion than to record the "actual" beauty of the subject which gives rise to his picture. We may thus come to realise that the art of sketching is a distinct branch of pictorial art with a special function of its own, a serious and a spiritual occupation, and one to which the greatest masters have considered it worth while to devote many golden hours of their lives. It may, in fact, be gauged with a considerable degree of certainty that for the artist few greater emotions are experienced than those which have accompanied the process of endeavouring to record in a sketch some grand and pictorial aspect of Nature or some pose of figure or composition of form which for a fleeting moment invests even the commonplace with the rare and intriguing quality of charm.



I. M. COHEN

SKETCH PORTRAIT IN SOFT PASTEL

CHAPTER II

MEDIA AND METHODS

IN contemplating the vast panorama of Art which is necessarily presented by the subject of this book one is urged to resort to some system of classification which will bring the whole range of artists, styles and methods into a reasonably comprehensible survey. Such a bold work, however, can hardly be attempted within the scope of this book. But in the following discourse it has been necessary to choose between one of three headings: "Artist," "medium" or "subject," under which to arrange a study of the practice of sketching. Classification by medium has been deemed wisest as being, to the student, the most helpful; results obtained from certain media being a more natural line of approach than subject or name. Thus, though it has proved necessary under the heading of Charcoal, for instance, to mention the work of a master and a lesser master in the same paragraph, this must not be taken as significant of the value of their work, but only as being necessary to a clear exposition and comparison of various manners of employing charcoal for sketching.

Whereas in literature there is but one medium, that of words, and at most a change of form—there are, in these days, at least seven or eight media which readily offer themselves to the artist as a means of expression. This, at first, may seem bewildering, necessitating, as it does, the making of a choice before the actual work is begun, and only a certain experience of the various media can modify this problem of choosing.

The problem is soon somewhat reduced, however, by discovering that certain effects are only approachable in

certain media, and that though finished works of art are possible in any one of these media, even lead pencil, chalk and pastel—for sketching, as differentiated from the making of drawings or paintings—it has been more usual to employ the dry media than the wet ones.

It may be that the strength and simplicity of much of the work of past periods is partly to be attributed to the limited number of media available. The early masters had but water-paint, pen and ink, chalk, plumbago and silver point. Oil-colour followed. Monochrome and water-colour, as we now understand it, was a later development; pastel later still. The acceptance of lead pencil was general only in the nineteenth century.

In recent times no new direct media have been introduced, with the result that the prevailing tendency towards novelty has led to experiments in new methods of applying the old ones, such as combinations of two or more media, specially prepared grounds, blotting, wiping out, spraying, the mixing of water-colour with rice paste, the manipulating of colours in a very liquid state and even painting over backgrounds of indelible ink. The results to be obtained from these methods and the technique which is proper to them have been discoursed on by modern exponents, and may be found to suit the temperament of some artists and to offer certain individual advantages.

It may also be that the complex panorama which Art presents to-day, both to the young student as well as to the lay mind, is largely the result of the many different manners—orthodox as well as experimental—in which pictures are painted, and the intense individualism in subject and technique which characterises modern work.

Thus, whereas in the past there were few men and limited means, to-day the field is crowded, points of view are hardly possible of classification, and means and material are present in abundance.

We propose, however, to take the recognised media in

what seems their natural order of employment and present their individual advantages, and the many and varied ways in which they have been and may be used for sketching; actually illustrating each, as far as this is possible through reproductions, by plates which have been both selected and prepared with the greatest care for this particular purpose.

LEAD PENCIL

Lead pencil as a sketching medium stands easily first in that it offers quite the simplest instrument that the artist can carry and handle. As a complete means for recording or as supplementary to the use of other media, for the making of rapid notes delineated or written, for an impression of fleeting effects, composition diagrams of the most extensive subject or the closer sketch of separate objects; or again for experimental sketches for the balance of darks and lights, such as Plate 19 suggests; for all these purposes the ordinary lead pencil is pre-eminently the most convenient.

It had only to be invented for this to be realised, and for its use henceforth to become popular; so that long before the present range of pencils was available artists sketched in lead pencil, rendering variation of tone by pressure.

This method—it happens—may, for general sketching purposes, still be considered a better way than that of carrying an assortment of leads varying from 3H to 4B.

The finished drawing is another matter. In the quiet of the studio a number of different degrees may be used with noteworthy effect, but in general sketching, and especially sketching out of doors where the chief factor is rapidity, familiarity with the use of one particular degree of lead may prove more useful, the average HB, for instance, giving most tones necessary for the sketch. A darker and softer lead may suit some temperaments better, but the

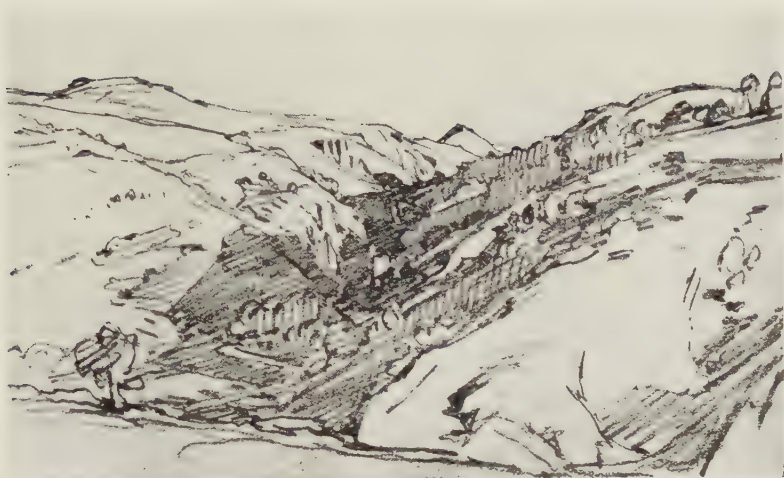
softer leads rub, of course, more easily and the touches lose crispness, so that for sketch-book work an *HB* may be found not only most desirable, but of ample volume.

What could be more effective and satisfactory than Mr. Leonard Squirrell's direct and simple method illustrated in Plate 18A? This is merely a rapid rendering in one degree of lead. There is no hesitation or mannerism whatever. No single line or portion of the sketch can be necessarily identified with any familiar object. Taken part by part and closely analysed it is merely hieroglyphics, yet the sum total is remarkable both in its breadth and representational value. Pencil has been employed for something that pencil will easily do, and which perhaps nothing else will do with quite the same rapidity or quite the same decision.

To the uninitiated this sketch is striking, to the artist it is of infinite value. Such a sketch as this, and many others which Mr. Squirrell renders in a similar manner, is a revelation of the adaptability of lead pencil, offering as it does immediate facility for the recording of a state of keen mental activity towards a subject perhaps suddenly realised and instantly desired. The vision being so quick, the sketch must be equally spontaneous in order that what is seen as a whole may not, when put down on paper, appear to be composed of parts, and this, though attainable particularly in black-and-white work, is a result peculiar to the rapid and confident handling of the lead pencil.

That the impression of a wide tract of landscape, lying part in light and part in shade, with all its local characteristics, can be easily conveyed by a few minutes of rapid movement of the everyday lead pencil is surely, in itself, sufficient to arouse, even in the minds of the most indifferent, a perception of those rare powers of selection, elimination and control which distinguish the great artist from the mere draughtsman.

Whether made for any ultimate purpose or put down for the sole joy of recording an impression or attitude of mind



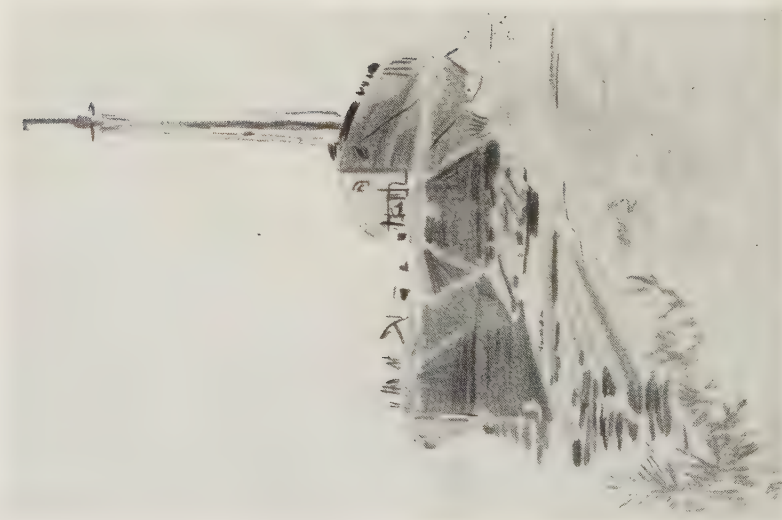
LEONARD SQUIRRELL

SKETCHES IN LEAD PENCIL OF YORKSHIRE
LANDSCAPES





SKETCHES IN LEAD PENCIL FOR SEASCAPES



JASPER SALWEY

towards something seen, a vital and interesting result can be achieved which carries its own measure of value and inspiration for the artist, just as it also does, when deeply considered, convey the significance of that element of wonder and responsiveness that Nature arouses in the mind of man.

In thus coming closely to consider such a simple and unpretentious sketch as this, and certain others of similarly high quality which go to illustrate these pages, we can get some way towards a definite understanding of a sketch and the act of sketching as differentiated from the making of a careful drawing or the painting of a highly finished or at least deeply considered picture.

For further instance the two illustrations on Plate 20 may be considered. These are typical examples of what may be rapidly produced without hesitation as the result of experiencing a sudden desire to sketch a subject seen by chance and instantly realised as having interest both of material and composition. The memory cannot retain all that such a sketch will record. The effort, though for the time being vigorous, is not exhausting, but the sketch once boldly rendered, the subject is thus secured for future reference and use. The actual practice of so doing is invaluable, while pleasure and confidence is derived from having clinched something which, in a moment of vision, was perceived as being of value. In such a case the lead pencil comes to hand as the one medium which will give the most desirable result.

It is curious that this practice, which was encouraged and cultivated at the first advent of pencil-work, seldom led to any real freedom and dexterity in its use for sketching. The somewhat slavish copying of model sketches, though good in moderation, if carried too far leads only to mannerism, and the reduction of all portrayal to formula. Ease of touch and the realisation of the special facility and responsiveness of the medium once reached, direct

and spontaneous sketching should be "gone for" without further delay.

The student can hardly do better than to allow himself positively to revel in pencil sketching; for ability to use a pencil rapidly and freely will always prove valuable, whatever other medium may especially attract him. That is to use it for sketching as he would use a pen for writing. For just as knowledge of the figure may perhaps be an essential to all advanced Art, and sooner or later influence the development of an artist's work, so facility with the lead pencil may really be the groundwork of any accomplished technique.

David Cox's quaint but delightful treatise *Landscape Painting and Effect* offers many suggestions in regard to sketching in pencil and other media which, though the language in which they are stated now seems pedantic, are nevertheless very illuminating to the beginner, to whom they are addressed.

Now the technique of lead pencil, as the technique of all other media, must be based entirely on the nature of the surface to be rendered, but the paper, board or whatever it may be is especially bound up with technique of all media that are "point" media rather than "brush" media. The response is more controlled by the material to which the medium is applied, the actual surface influencing the result even more than in the application of water-colour. For instance, working in lead pencil on "not" Whatman gives an entirely different result to that obtained from working on smooth Cartridge; the exact effects to be obtained on the former simply do not result from working on the latter.

The question of materials and their relationship to expression is one that is perhaps not given sufficient emphasis. As we have endeavoured to show in our introductory remarks, there has ever been a striving for more complete expression. The coming of new media from time to time has always led to greater activity and helped to broaden the field. The advent of water-colour as a fully developed



J. D. HARDING

A SKETCH IN PENCIL AND BODY COLOUR



process opened up a new vista before undreamt of, and has since done more to bring about a wider understanding and appreciation of Art than anything which has happened within its sphere of recent times. That expression often depends upon the discovery of a congenial medium is not to be doubted. The Venetians would perhaps never have produced such a rich and splendid gallery of work but for the development of oil-painting; whereas artists of the Norwich School, after seeking deeper expression in oils, returned in some instances to water-colour and remained more expressive in the slighter media. Turner, as an exception, apparently found himself at home with them all and employed one or other at will, just as a poet might write in blank verse or rhyme or couch his thoughts in any other form to suit the subject of his theme. The work of artists who have used line in combination with monochrome or colour demonstrates how the discovery of certain methods reveals talent which otherwise might remain dormant. So also extensive practice in the use of lead pencil on different surfaces may lead to remarkable facility, not approachable by keeping to the papers and technique prescribed for this medium by its Victorian exponents.

It comes as a surprise to some to hear highly rolled paper, heavy clay paper or even Bristol Board recommended for lead pencil work, but for sketching the most rapid, the most interesting and certainly the broadest results are only possible, in direct and rapid work, on a smooth surface.

A sense of colour can be quite quickly conveyed by laying in perfectly flat tones of varying degree, and even with a *B* pencil great depth is possible without wounding the paper, while outline of striking character is instantly received by the sensitive surface. The quality of the result is, of course, quite different to that given by the burr of a rough paper or card, but there is a certain liquidity, what may even be called a "juiciness," in lead pencil thus applied, which is entirely peculiar to the medium.

For general sketching a smooth paper is therefore to be recommended, giving, as it does, something of the decorative nature of very liquid paint work and responding, without the slightest impediment or loss of time, to the most urgent necessity of the sketcher. Added resiliency may also be gained by superimposing the paper on several other sheets.

The cutting of the pencil to a wedge-shaped point is strongly urged by some exponents, notably Mr. Borough Johnson, but only experiment and practice can discover for the student exactly what is most effective in this respect. It hardly needs to be said that the smoother surfaces demand a blunter point for rapid work. The actual process of sketching rapidly will quickly produce an edge, especially if the darker masses are first blocked in and the tonal scheme pitched fairly low. A quick turn of the pencil on to its sharper edge gives the crisp lines which are needed for accentuation and delineation amidst the broad tracts of tone.

For the intimate sketching of architectural features this technique, carefully applied, cannot be bettered, for the possibilities of study and representation seem inexhaustible and mark lead pencil as the supreme medium for the architect.¹ Prout and others were not long in putting it to extensive use, though the effective results to be derived from massing tones in addition to delineation never seem to have been fully exploited by the topographical artists, despite the fact that they sketched so extensively in the medium.

Though lead pencil is indeed a complete medium in itself, its very adaptability suggests experiment, and the first departure which we find from its pure employment is its application to tinted paper, leading at once to the obvious addition of body colour. This is in many ways an

* See *Sketching in Lead Pencil for Architects and Others*.

exceedingly clever device. It at once makes the paper itself register all the half tones, and reduces the actual drawing to the careful placing of dark and high lights; and when achieved with such artistry as that displayed in the superb example by J. D. Harding (Plate 21) the method is seen to offer infinite possibility for rapid picture-building.

How small a step it is between a blank sheet of paper and a work of Art is to be perhaps more readily realised in this method of utilising the tone of the background than in any other. The blank patches which become enclosed amidst the darks and lights seem verily to take on weight and solidity and to fall into line with the conception without effort.

Practice in this method will probably soon lead to exciting results, the adding of the body colour giving immediate life and meaning to what otherwise would not only be incomplete but insignificant. Even the most minute touches of white tell with instant effectiveness.

It is amazing that these old models of method which can be studied with sheer delight in the sketch-books of Harding, Beverley, Wimperis and many others are not now more often emulated. Though subject and temperament may change, the method remains possible of application if only its special advantages are perceived, and the use of the white kept well under control. Plate 18B reveals the fact that a present-day master *has* perceived it, applying body colour with ingenuity but remarkable restraint to a subject which might otherwise be just too grey to be entirely interesting, but which, by virtue of the added touches, becomes immense and wonderful. While Plate 22 illustrates how lead pencil may be employed to glean material which might be invaluable to a painter of animal subjects.

CARBON PENCIL AND CRAYON

To some the sense of a certain stiffness and immobility when handling a lead pencil, the necessity, in fact, for some degree of conscious physical effort in actually applying it, similar to, but of course not equal to, that felt by the dry-point etcher, may incline the student to range around for a medium of a like nature, but one free, if possible, from these particular impediments. The medium he will probably discover is the carbon pencil and its ally, crayon.

In considering the question of point media and that of carbon pencil particularly, which so readily responds to any kind of handling, we can most advantageously pause to consider what is universally understood as "manner." A striking manner of sketching observed in the work of another artist may immediately move the student to an endeavour actually to copy it. This practice is obviously unsatisfactory, even if successful, and is at least likely to hamper the development of an individual touch. The employment of the "point" media and especially the "black and white" media is, at the best, a convention, and anything which further tends to reduce the actual touch to a formula is undesirable.

The actual manner of handling the medium should not be conscious. Marked individuality is sure to come of long use and experience, and for the beginner to attempt consciously to copy what the master has come to do sub-consciously is not only to limit his own efforts, but the inclinations of his own taste and temperament.

To master a medium is to use it in a way that is ultimately not possible to analyse. When mastery comes there is a complete fusion between the impulse to create and the means of so creating. Art results, and just how it has been achieved is beyond the reach of perception.

Whether the cultivation of a particular manner of rapid rendering aids the expression of the utmost which an artist



RUBENS

A TRIAL SKETCH IN CHALK FOR A LARGER PICTURE



has to convey, or whether it may hamper his expression, is the real crux of the matter. In endeavouring to arrive at a conclusion regarding this important point it must be clearly kept in view that pictorial art does not consist in the exact representation of Nature, but in the expression of those impressions which Nature makes upon the temperament of the artist. What exists in the universal lives in the individual, and all that is really composed of facts and objects in a landscape of vast extent, for instance, may, even in a tiny sketch, be presented as something of sublime wonder and beauty. The whole is pressed into the part. The visual sense exercising its highest function is united with the practised power to render in little the comparatively immense.

If the cultivation of some particular manner of rapidly achieving this end can be accomplished by the use of certain conventions and mannerisms it may be good; but if this results in limiting expression to certain subjects and certain effects only, then manner should be relinquished and made servile to mood, and technique so developed as to interpret fancy.

The manner therefore of handling a medium must be one which, with the greatest economy of effort, is not only comprehensible, but at the same time directed to actual charm of workmanship proper to and within the limits of the medium selected. All the "point" media, and especially carbon pencil and crayon, are necessarily media with certain limitations for the purposes of sketching, while being yet very responsive to the mood of the artist and to his ability to handle them. Every touch will tell and appear either just feeble, accomplished and free, or mannered and self-conscious. Facility for courageous manipulation and contrasts of dark outline with the subtlest shading are possible. The use of each medium brings with it, of course, its own particular problem, and to continue our more specialised observations, these may now with advantage be mentioned.

An advantage of carbon pencil is a certain density and opaqueness in the darks as compared to the "sheen" which is noticeable when lead pencil is heavily applied, and is sometimes considered objectionable. Carbon pencil being fairly tough—tougher than crayon—is especially suited to more detailed delineation, such as distances in a like sketch to Plate 36, while crayon—a much softer material—quickly producing a broad point in use—is more suited to the rendering of nearer objects and passages of heavy contrast; but neither carbon pencil nor crayon should be loaded on the paper too heavily, as they lose luminosity. Charcoal must always be the better medium where much *weight* is required.

Both carbon pencil and crayon are more or less limited to use on paper with a burr. To carbon pencil particularly nothing smoother than a good Cartridge will offer that responsiveness to rapid work which is essential.

RED CHALK

This is a medium which no student should pass by without, at least, experimenting in its possibilities. It is often ignored, yet it happens to be, for certain purposes—portrait and figure sketching particularly—one of the most delightful of all "point" media in which to work. Reference to the sketches of the Dutch artists of the seventeenth century will at once confirm this view.

Unlike charcoal, it is best employed on a smooth paper, but one without a highly rolled surface, in any case a paper free from size. Quite apart from its particular charm for line work and its adaptability for sheer delineation, red chalk, carefully rubbed, can be employed to lay an even tone to which outline can be added, or other manners of drawing superimposed. White and black chalk can further be added, giving something in the nature of a simple colour scheme. It can even be powdered and, by mixing with



ALFRED STEVENS



TRIAL SKETCHES IN RED CHALK FOR MURAL DECORATIONS





HARRY WATSON

RAPID LIFE SCHOOL SKETCH IN CRAYON



HARRY WATSON

RAPID LIFE SCHOOL SKETCH IN CHARCOAL

water and gum, be applied with a brush. Unusual manners of employing it may be observed in the drawings of Holbein.

For sketching, however, its rapid application to tinted paper, with possibly the addition of only a little white chalk for the high lights, will be reckoned as the most useful manner of employing it. The several examples here reproduced by Rubens, Watteau and Alfred Stevens (see Plates 23, 24, 25) are illustrative of its value for the making of careful sketches of costume and figure subjects, where ease and grace of line are specially demanded, with a more intimate searching after character than is possible in charcoal or soft pastel; and where more searching delineation is needed than is possible in rapid brush-work. More subtlety and mystery, without loss of power, results than in the employment of ink or even lead pencil for such purposes. White chalk rapidly applied on toned paper has been found to be especially suited to the sketching of drapery, a little black chalk being used for mapping cast shadows.

As has already been observed regarding these "point" media, every line will be found to tell and contribute to the charm of the sketch as a whole. No blurring or slurring over is possible if the work is to be forceful and present that accomplished manner which the trained eye looks for, and which can make a sketch appealing, even from the point of view of technique alone.

A visit to the public galleries throughout England is an excursion which every student should endeavour to make. Previously supplied with a certain knowledge of the various media, a close scrutiny of the sketches which are to be discovered, interspersed amidst more highly-finished works, will bring recurring delight. The wealth of examples exhibited and the remarkable variety of trial and effort displayed is in itself an inspiration.

It is in the intimate and individual employment of the

“point” media that the galleries will be found to be most rich, for it is to this direct and comparatively simple means of expression that artists from the day of Leonardo da Vinci to that of Bone and Rushbury have most often been wont to resort.

In the mastery and handling of silver point and lead pencil, crayon, chalk and charcoal, the artist may speak with eloquence to the delight of his fellow-men, while every example of their use and application suggests yet other manners in which they might be employed or combined. So direct and responsive are all these media that the student has but to acquaint himself with their use to find them the servant of his immediate purposes or his most sudden inspirations. Sketches in the point media by even such lesser-known artists as Bright, Dodgson, Leman, Walker, Wimperis and many others, may be looked for and discovered with delight, while works by those of greater fame will be found well distributed throughout the country.

CHARCOAL

It may generally be said that charcoal, as a direct sketching medium, reveals itself to the artist more as a surprise and a discovery than as an obvious and common means for the purpose. Its use in the Art School as a medium for the meticulous study of casts is only one of the several manners in which it may be employed, and one which rather tends to hide than to reveal its distinctive possibilities for other purposes.

Charcoal has, it seems, except by a few artists, among whom Mr. Hans Heysen stands prominently, never come near to full exploitation. It may even be hazarded that if the technique of its various manners of application could be fully tried out, its possibilities might be found to surpass those of lead pencil except in the one particular of colour



RUBENS

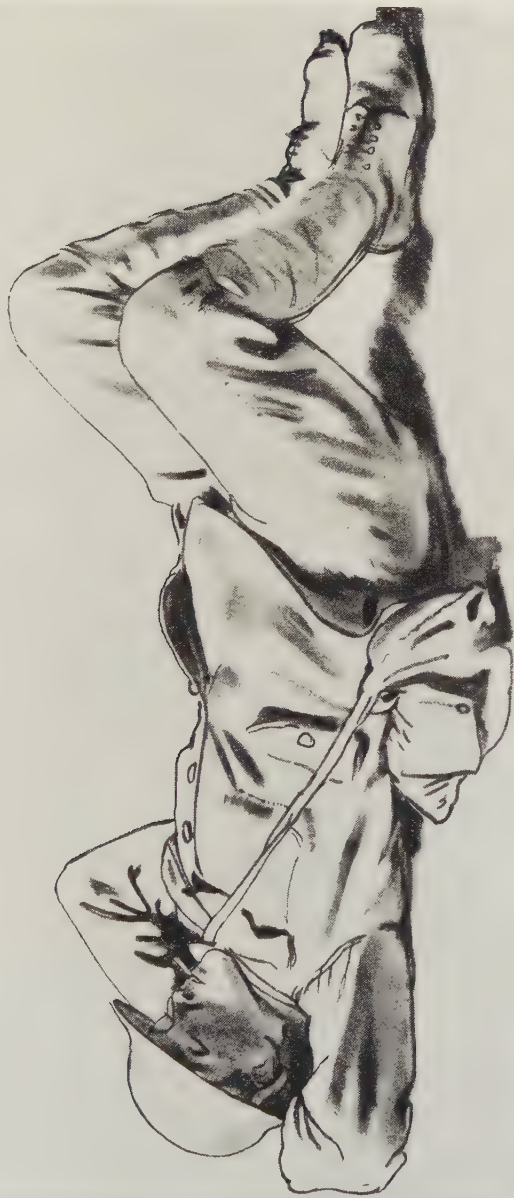
SOME SKETCHBOOK IMPRESSIONS IN CHARCOAL



SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, R.A.



DIRECT PORTRAIT SKETCHES IN CHARCOAL



SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, R.A.

SKETCH IN CHARCOAL



sense, so especially peculiar to decorative lead pencil work. There is a joyous fascination for the artist in thus contemplating the media at his disposal as always holding some quality which he may discover by experiment.

Perhaps in a consideration of all the media—other than those involving reproduction from plates, such as etching and aquatint—charcoal, powerfully and confidently employed, may be given the palm for fulfilling the actual mission of pictorial art in respect to a “black and white” picture. This may be a bold statement, but it is one which an exhibition of masterly charcoal work might go far to demonstrate. To the peculiar black of charcoal, surpassable of course by the actual blackness of ink, is added not only the appeal which bold and rapid workmanship makes to the beholder, but a particular power to arrest the attention and stimulate interest; this is a unique characteristic of charcoal drawing. It may also be that the peculiar quality of suggestiveness, which arises from the accidental effects brought about by making marks with charcoal on rough paper, gives to the charcoal sketch an inexhaustible interest.

Charcoal cannot—for the sketcher—be said to be actually as handy as lead pencil, as it must be protected in transport, and the sketch must of course be sprayed with “Fixatif” at completion; but certainly as a relief from the use of more common media, and for moods of boldness and confidence, it will respond readily and answer that clear awakening of the pictorial consciousness with which the true artist is often blessed.

A study of Plates 12, 32, 33, illustrating the work of Mr. Hans Heysen, who by numerous works of a similarly high order, both in charcoal and lead pencil, has contributed so largely to placing Australian art on a high level, will open the eyes to those possibilities of charcoal which may not have been altogether realised. Quite apart from the fine pictorial sense displayed there is a thrill to

be derived from studying them as examples of charcoal technique. Fine drawing, composition, decorativeness, texture, general lighting, concentrated light, diffusion, a sense of heat and quietude, above all the romantic note, especially in the sketch of the Osier (Plates 12, 32, 33), show how Mr. Heysen makes charcoal respond to all these demands. The sketches are indeed triumphs to which the student may turn again and again for encouragement and inspiration.

It may be observed by close reference to these plates that texture, atmosphere, etc., may be conveyed not by any striving for these things, but by just applying the charcoal in some particular way; by rubbing, for instance, after application, or by making a point of not rubbing; by dragging, by hatching, by pressing hard, or by treating with special delicacy; by stopping the lines abruptly, or by commencing a line with pressure and fading out to transparency as the need may be.

In Plate 12 Mr Heysen shows that the use of toned paper and the application of high lights is as effective in combination with charcoal as with lead pencil, and in the three examples selected from among many others he has produced of equal merit, the particular fact that their appeal and interest does not diminish, however often one returns to consider them, will be found strangely true.

The observation already made, viz., that the effectiveness of all "point" media as differentiated from "brush" media is closely dependent on the paper or surface is especially applicable to charcoal. Its use on highly rolled paper is not altogether impossible, but is certainly undesirable. Charcoal demands a paper with a grain, such as Michallet or coarse Cartridge, in order that the burr may act on the medium and cause its deposit on the surface in that loose and open manner which is its particular charm, resulting in that minute alternation of negative and positive, so to speak, which gives a sense of transparency where this is wanted;



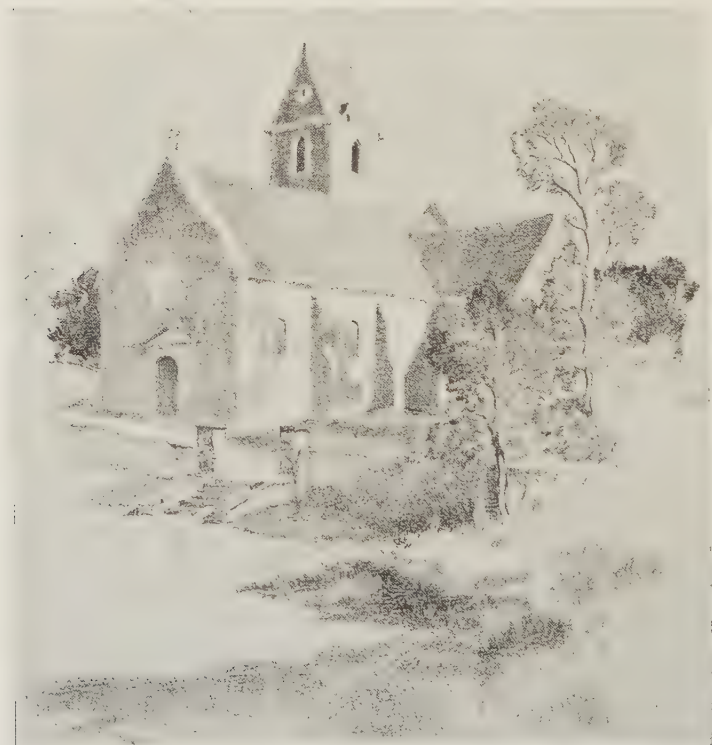
HANS HEYSEN

AUSTRALIAN LANDSCAPE, SKETCH IN CHARCOAL



F. L. GRIGGS

RAPID SKETCH IN LEAD PENCIL



JASPER SALWEY

SKETCH IN COLOURED CHALKS

which gives a suggestion of light within the darkest shadows, atmosphere to distances, and roughness to rough textures. The act of rubbing with the tip of the finger immediately gives to portions of the sketch so rendered an opaqueness where this may be required, and many other possible devices, employed at the will of the artist, may be adopted within the scope of this medium and made to meet the widest demands of pictorial work.

The vigorous figure work of Rubens, of which two examples may be studied in Plates 23 and 29, shows that the rapid rendering of subjects of even so difficult a nature is possible to this medium, and that the talent of so great a master is not hampered, but actually displayed by its possibilities, and exhibited by the variety of line and quality which results from using charcoal for making the simplest sketch of a limb or feature. The suggestive but amazingly vital sketch (Plate 3) by Velasquez is a wonderful example of the true art of sketching. Though it is but an impression, a wealth of ability and knowledge has been instantly summoned for the production of a sketch of untold value to the artist in securing an idea for a painting of even large dimensions.

COLOURED CHALKS

Few there are who cannot remember the delights of childhood and not least that of a box of coloured chalks. This first realisation of colour in relation to drawing was an excitement which led perhaps to the extensive portrayal of fancy, and much wearing down of the greens and reds on the depiction of forests and soldiers with little less use of the yellows and blues on day-dreams and fairy-tales. That these chalks were a medium in which a grown artist might work out grown-up ideas could hardly enter the child mind, but the process of growing up reveals this to be true, and coloured chalks enter into the category of

sketching media and, if systematically used, have quite remarkable possibilities.

There is, of course, a technique proper to every medium which, if discovered, will bring out the best of which it is capable. Coloured chalks are made in quite a surprising number of pencils, especially in America, and some makes are quite free from grit and may be easily sharpened. With a varied display to choose from, the tendency is, as with pastel, to produce sketches which are more pretty than beautiful. To counteract this it is a good plan to combine their use with lead pencil, using the lead for the delineation and for supplying the darks, but tinting here and there with chalk and thus filling in blank spaces, and even applying the chalk over the tones of lead pencil. This process is a good one for the artist who likes to carry a medium that he may only need by chance, and who yet has reason to reduce his impedimenta to the smallest compass; and who at times may yearn for a little colour after over-much work in black and white. Plate 34 is a definite example.

But to use the medium in this way is not to bring out all of which it is capable. Rich and fascinating sketches can be carried out by the lively application of even a small selection of colours; sketches which, if vignetted and kept more fragmentary than complete, may serve many purposes, especially that of illustration to descriptive text.

To avoid unpleasantly sweet colouring it seems best to allow the more sombre colours, such as the browns and purples, to predominate and to knead in other colours as the sketch goes on, using the most vivid colours very sparingly, or at least with great caution, for the chalk being so crisp, every touch tells. The colours do not mingle except in so far as they react on each other to the visual sense. The little sketch on Plate 34 was carried out with a considerable number of colours, but so chosen and used as to counteract each other and thus produce a uniformity

of tone which, though luminous, is not nauseating. There is no precedent for any extensive employment of this medium, which is, and must necessarily be, at least for the rapid process of sketching, a complete convention at best.

It is not impossible that it could be used to obtain perfect gradation of tints over comparatively large areas of a picture, but the process would be exceedingly laborious and for sketching quite impracticable. It would in any case be distinctly an instance of employing a medium to do something which others will do much better.

An interesting use of this medium is its moderate employment in combination with lead pencil. When time is limited and the paraphernalia necessary to water-colours is prohibitive, the addition of a passage of coloured chalk here and there after the main body of the subject has been expressed in pencil is particularly pleasing, an especially luminous effect being possible by filling in with flat colour certain tracts of the sketch which have, for this particular purpose, been left clear of pencil work, while the actual superimposing of colour on the pencil, if desired, gives interest without detracting from the crispness of the lead work. The application of the chalk tends rather to hatching than to rubbing.

PASTEL

Pastel, like lead pencil, has lately enjoyed a renaissance, perhaps largely on account of the recent amalgamation of the Pencil with the Pastel Society. Another reason may be that its cultivation has led certain very talented artists to find in it a means of expression which suits them more than well. This new-born popularity has not resulted from its practice on the old-fashioned lines which held sway for so long in the hands of amateurs who endeavoured to emulate the pictures of Rosalba Carriera and others, and which

resulted in it becoming associated with a somewhat smudgy and pretty manner of sentimental picture-making, but by looking back to such masters of this medium as Fontaine La Tour, and particularly Chardin, who employed a technique proper to the fullest use of the medium. Within the last two years entrancing results of its mastery by artists of high training and ability have been exhibited and reveal pastel to be a medium of very great importance. It is probable that it will henceforth be much more extensively used and exploited for pictures of considerable dimensions, as indeed by some artists, most notably Mr. Cohen and Mr. Richter, it has already been, and that it will come forward as a definitely recognised medium, such as water-colour, oil-colour and etching, so arresting is it when used boldly, so varied its possibilities, so scientifically interesting its technique.

To whatever extent this may prove to be true, by anyone who has tried his hand at pastel it is acknowledged as at least the most convenient, if not the supreme, medium for direct colour sketching. To this virtue, however, must at once be added the fact that, if anything, pastel is too easy. It carries with it this danger of which the student should be warned. It is so easy to plunge forward with a set of pastels into the production of innumerable little lively sketches overflowing with vivid colour and the joyousness which the very act of using the medium must engender. Thus may sketching appear all too simple a matter. The beginner is captivated and lifted off his feet by the very facility of his medium. The fundamental considerations which must control true Art are dimmed by a possible pageant of colour and dexterity.

To safeguard against this the student should at once turn to a consideration of the work of those who, though evidently capable of using pastel with freedom, have yet tempered their work with restraint, and gained so much thereby. The remarkable example by Mr. J. Cohen illus-



LEONARD SQUIRRELL

RECORD SKETCH, IN LEAD PENCIL FOR A PASTEL DRAWING



PRELIMINARY SKETCH IN CARBON PENCIL FOR THE
PASTEL DRAWING SHOWN ON PLATE 37

LEONARD SQUIRRELL

trated in colour on Plate 17, perhaps the finest pastel of a figure subject of recent times, is, in itself, a long lesson for the student who, armed with a box of pastels, might believe himself more than accomplished. A subject which might so easily have been burdened with rich colour and violent contrasts appeals by reason of the very manner in which it has been arranged as a scheme of exquisitely subtle tints, and rendered in a manner that is obviously the result of lengthy experiment. Thus an idea, already beautiful in its conception, is further enhanced both by treatment and technique. And this is a spontaneous production, instantly realised and worked at without delay, so that when desire to throw in colour was doubtless strong the execution has been controlled throughout to the point of completion.

The pastel work of Mr. Leonard Squirrell, to whom we have already referred in connection with lead pencil, is no less remarkable in regard to this question of restraint in the employment of so apt a medium. But Mr. Squirrell's pastel work, which has come to us as a revelation, is approached not directly but through pencil sketching, the making of written notes and, as he himself explains, the ability to memorise subtle tones. Many an artist might well be satisfied to bring from his subject such forceful and suggestive sketches as those illustrated on Plate 35. But to Mr. Squirrell these are but the machinery behind the scenes. For him they are more than sketches, embodying not only the conception but all the study necessary to the production of a completely worked out pastel. We would be satisfied to regard them simply as examples of masterly pencil sketching, but they are included under this heading because Mr. Squirrell shows us that through them pastel, in its fully expressed form, is to be approached. This is a similar method to that which other artists have adopted for approaching finished work in other media, except that Mr. Squirrell carries his note to the point of a fine sketch,

recording all that must be recorded and building into his sketch the conception of his ultimate purpose; and doubtless all the while learning, from the real facts before him, the lesson presented by those passages of shade and sombreness which counteract the brightest colours, and those harmonies of general effect which distinguish Nature from the invention of man, which, when observed, make Nature always beautiful, and when omitted leave fancy too often bizarre.

Plate 38 presents to all who would sketch direct in pastel really excellent instruction. Here is what can be a very direct and simple matter approached in a very direct and genuine way. The sketch is in pastel, and the finished picture in pastel. The latter is a direct resultant of the former. All that is merely noted in the sketch is seen worked out to full expression in the finished picture, with only those adjustments and minor additions necessary to express the note of romance in the subject which has obviously been glimpsed in the sketch. The weight of tone which Mr. Popham has secured is surprising, startling perhaps to many who are wont to associate pastel only with prettiness and delicacy. Yet there is nothing depressing about the picture, for what might otherwise be too sombre is brought to life, and consequently to meaning, by deft touches of vivid colour in significant features, such as the boats and indications of reflected light which pastel will so readily supply. What is also interesting to note is that the making of a sketch actually in the same medium in which it was to be again rendered has revealed the need of those particular improvements which the artist has eventually made, not least being that of enclosing within a prescribed area a subject which has been observed to be not so forceful when—as in the case of the sketch—it was merely vignetted.

Mr. Littlejohn's sketch of the interior of a Sussex barn (Plate 64) is a particularly instructive example of how the essentials of a subject—form, general tones and a sugges-



LEONARD SQUIRRELL

FINISHED PASTEL DRAWING, BASED ON SKETCH SHOWN ON PLATE 36



J. K. POPHAM

(above) LANDSCAPE SKETCH IN PASTEL ;
(below) FINISHED PASTEL DRAWING

tion of colour—may be quickly set down in this medium. The sketch is on dark brown paper, which, in itself, supplies the middle tone, expression being obtained by the most direct and economical application of lights and darks which in pitch are above or below the tone of the paper. The method is obviously most suited to the rapid sketching of such subjects, provided it is treated entirely as a convention and truth to the colours of the original is not demanded.

A study therefore of these examples goes to show that those who have mastered pastel as a medium and employ it to serve their particular aims have succeeded in avoiding the danger of riotous colouring into which it too easily tends to lead the unwary. Pastel affords an opportunity for the development of the most varied technique, yet as is clearly expounded in the latest text-books on the subject there are really but three distinct ways of employing it, of which that of juxtaposing strokes so that the paper shows through is really the most satisfactory. It is obvious, too, that if in doing so the wide range of tints which are obtainable are all employed the possibility for gradation is almost infinite. Yet for sketching it may be best to employ six or eight colours at most, varying their combination to meet the demands of almost any subject. The days of rubbing and stippling and finicking with this medium, it seems, are over. Even the boldest draughtsman, seeing it in the light of modern developments, may include it among those media which will answer the demands of the most vigorous expression.

MONOCHROME

Returning to the “black and white” media, we come next to monochrome, and consequently move to the consideration of one applied with a brush. It is at once obvious to the sketcher that from a practical point of view this is not so portable. Whatever the tint adopted, whether the grey

which Payne invented for this purpose and which has since been denoted by his name, whether indigo or sepia, lamp-black or indian ink, the necessity of carrying water and at least one brush is here involved. It is therefore doubtful whether as much direct monochrome sketching has been done out of doors as in the studio.

Its special advantages are not at first evident, but a study of its employment by such masters as Cotman and Turner at once reveals its possibilities.

Round about the middle of the eighteenth century it occupied the time and attention of artists whose names still remain familiar. Paul Sandby and Gainsborough, for instance, employed it for the portrayal of their new-born sympathy for scenes of rural life in their own country, and for what is generally understood as the "picturesque." Such statements as the following go to enlighten us: "Gainsborough water-colours were mainly confined to bold sketches in monochrome, and those of a more varied tint are but pale things." Of J. R. Cozens: "His drawings are usually classed among drawings in tint, not drawings in colour." "His earlier drawings have a ground of indian ink, and the slight washes of colour afterwards added were very low in scale, only here and there exceeding what may be called a grey: grey warm and cold, grey bluish or greenish," and so on.

A number of lesser artists, such as Gilpin, Brooking and Dominico Serres executed their sketches and drawings almost entirely in this medium, though their many experiments and varied manners of employing it indicate that they were ever striving to free themselves from its limitations. The very fact that monochrome was the popular and recognised medium in those days, and is not now the vogue, suggests that it was resorted to rather as a necessity than as a choice; and though Turner particularly, and other artists of later times, returned to it, even when colour work was more popular, this was mainly for the purpose of

illustration and reproduction. Turner's wonderful set of drawings for the *Liber Studiorum* were, as an example, prepared particularly for the engraver. Its marked advantage is undoubtedly the practice which it can afford the sketcher in spontaneously recording tone values, and though actually all the scope of pure water-colour, except the actual colour itself, is possible to it, it is for this one very important reason that it is well worth cultivation.

To execute subjects in monochrome alone, therefore, must prove extraordinarily helpful, and the results of a season of work in this medium may be at once perceptible—in regard to “weight” and forcefulness—on a return to colour work. The little sketches (Plate 40), probably the handiwork of Birket Foster when on a visit to Spain, cannot be considered as other than extraordinarily vital and interesting. The originals measure only about three superficial inches, but within this compass a vast subject has been suggested by the simple process of manipulating a little sepia diluted with water. The result here seen must surely recommend its adoption for sketching. A holiday spent in the making of such little pictures, and even ones more broadly treated and of rather larger dimensions, would prove invaluable to the would-be water-colour artist by cultivating an ability to gauge tones and to record them faithfully. The eye for colour must for the time being be closed, but form and tone value, by which more than half the significance of the outward world is made manifest, are on that very account the more closely noted, while nearly everything which contributes to the “romantic” in a subject can still be secured.

The monochromes by Cotman (Plate 39) are obviously trial sketches for more finished pictures, even if the oils made from them were not so well known, but in comparing the monochrome with the oil it must surely be admitted that the sketch is the more appealing. The devices of scratching a high light, dragging on a little pale

colour here and there, with the addition, perhaps, of a spot of vivid colour, which Cotman has introduced with such artistry, lift such sketches at once from the category of a mere exercise.

Ordinary writing ink—no other medium being to hand—thinned as required with a little water or used “neat,” may serve the artist’s purpose in emergency. Quite useful little sketches for composition and tone value may be produced in this everyday commodity. The introduction of pen and ink in combination with monochrome washes, a useful process for very rapid sketching, may be studied with great advantage by reference to the work of Towne and Tiepolo (see Plates 62, 66), and to the vital sketches of Claude Lorrain. Plate 4 is typical and representative of a large number executed in a similar manner by the latter artist. Broad washes of about equal tone have been used to bring together ink work which would otherwise be ineffective in conveying a shadowed scene, which is the prevailing note in the subject. Plate 5, the handiwork of Jacques Courtois, is a good example of how a sketch for the trial of composition and tone may be rapidly rendered in this medium. The note of force and singleness of idea upon which an artist may sometimes wish to lay stress is seen here not only to be possible, but to be most definitely expressed.

But most particularly, in this respect, must be borne in mind the intensely vital sketches of the Dutch School, in which the combination of bistre with ink line was employed to produce rapidly the most arresting portraiture, the most inspiring notes of composition brought into use to depict, with equal force, some intimate interior study or extensive landscape. In the manner in which Rembrandt handles this combination of media may be seen the very highest art of sketching.





BIRKET FOSTER

SKETCHES IN MONOCHROME





JASPER SALWEY

SKETCH IN WATER COLOUR AND CHARCOAL



CHARCOAL AND COLOUR

Before passing on definitely to the consideration of the two great brush media, we may hesitate for a moment to consider a method of sketching which consists of a combination of one which we have reviewed, viz. charcoal, and the one which we are about to review, viz. water-colour.

Charcoal and colour used in combination as a medium may be said to be in a purely experimental stage; its use is doubtless temperamental. To employ it may be merely to satisfy a mood. Interest in it for the artist may be only a passing one. It is probable that it has never been developed by anyone into a definite and systematic medium. Yet the manner in which charcoal can be used to reinforce the colour is curiously interesting, and special examples are here illustrated, one being in colour, in order that what virtue it has may be comprehended. (See Plates 41, 42.) There is perhaps no more rapid colour medium than this. True water-colour may immediately be considered as more rapid, but in employing any of the subtleties proper to the former medium, their very point would be counteracted by the charcoal. This medium is only desirable and effective if used in a very broad and decorative way.

The charcoal should be applied so that it not only holds together dexterous and rapid washes of colour which might otherwise have no meaning, but should be so introduced as to give texture to light surfaces and solidity to dark ones. This method may be considered by some to be too much in the nature of a compromise, but even if it is only a device, and obviously one which, carried too far, defeats its own purpose, when time is a factor it will be found a more rapid method of making large colour sketches than is possible by any other combination of media, especially if the palette is limited to quite a few colours and these of a sombre hue.

WATER-COLOUR

Out of a grey dawn arose the splendour of water-colour as we may now see it shining in all its brilliance amidst the galaxy of the sketching media. Its development from the day of Paul Sandby to the day of Sargent has been a laboured one, and though in the interim there have been artists such as Bonnington, Cotman, Turner, Beverley, Birket Foster and others who, in their own manner and in their own day, have touched its highest known possibilities of technique, its pioneers, who must have been subconsciously aware of its potentialities and who strove so intensively to discover its secret, would not be a little amazed at the extent of its present employment, if not also at the ease and dexterity with which artists of recent times have succeeded in its manipulation.

The water-colour box, the commonest object of the artist's outfit, is now known to hold possibilities beyond the dreams of the early experimenters in this medium. Water-colour in its fully developed form only began to be generally appreciated at the time of Girtin, during the last ten years, in fact, of the eighteenth century. The first use of colour with water as its vehicle is lost in the mists of history, and the making of drawings with transparent tints was practised on the Continent as well as in England in the earliest decades of that century, but what was termed water-colour in those days, even down to the beginning of the nineteenth century, was often a very different matter from what is now generally understood by the term.

Lambert Scott, Zuccarelli, Tavener and others were all considered water-colour exponents, but their work was almost entirely in monochrome or body colour; and in associating water-colour with the names of Cozens and Gainsborough it is but seldom realised that they sketched not in actual colour, but almost entirely in browns, greys and greens. What doubtless, in a large measure, helped to

realise the development of water-colour into a definite colour medium was the growing need for a direct sketching medium in colour in order that response might be made to the change of attitude from imaginative classicism to naturalism, demanding not invention but direct interpretation and portrayal.

This sudden change in outlook is extremely interesting and opened up a new epoch in pictorial art in which the practice of sketching took an important place and revealed its great purpose and value. Curiously enough, when pictorial art, together with all the arts, became cheapened and sentimentalised in the late nineteenth century, it was in the realm of sketching that the most vital work was preserved, certain artists displaying finer taste and talent in their sketches than in the work by which they were best known to the public.

In a backward glance toward the time when water-colour, as we now understand it, was first developed, we may note that the artists who employed it were often great and always keen, that they observed and studied, and that above all they sketched; and though often compelled to manufacture their own colours, to support themselves on the scantiest of means and to pursue their art despite the fact that they received but little encouragement from the public, they developed the practice of going direct to Nature for inspiration. They employed every medium known to them, and yearly broadened the field of their endeavours. Their lives are an example, their enthusiasm inspires us, and their sketches as well as their finished works remain among some of the finest achievements that Art has yet shown. Water-colour continues to prove itself perhaps the greatest of all discoveries from the artist's point of view, in that it reveals new possibilities at the hands of each artist of talent who employs it. Whatever personal opinion may be held, it is not possible to point to any particular technique and say: "This is the way to paint in water-colour." This applies

particularly to its employment for sketching when rapidity is the first essential and the artist is concerned with achieving his object as best he will. It may, however, be noted that most of its greatest exponents have tended always to using it in the simplest and broadest way; and that is almost to say in the quickest way and with a limited palette. And though they chose certain papers because they gave certain qualities, they applied the paint rapidly and allowed the work to remain as first rendered.

To this fact the student who would set out boldly to sketch in water-colour may turn for his first lesson, and if he will look to the early artists for precedent, should refer particularly to the sketches of W. J. Müller (an example of whose work may be seen in Plates 43, 53, 59), perhaps the most brilliant of all exponents of water-colour sketching; and for less rapid, more considered, more decorative, but nevertheless direct sketching, of course to Cotman. For its particularly normal and straightforward use, the work of Thomas Collier, here shown in differing subjects in Plates 45A, 58, offers example, while in the amazing variety of Turner's experiments may be found a justification for deliberately varying the manner of its use from the painting of the merest impression to that of building up a colour scheme over carefully sketched compositions. Plates 61A, 6 are representative examples of Turner's varied manner of rendering.

Whatever views may be held in regard to looking back to the early English water-colourists for example and inspiration in matters of handling and technique, a wealth of idea and knowledge resides there from which every student, however revolutionary, may learn something.

From its first development by the topographers, through all the years of the Norwich School, through the medium of its star performers as well as the tricks of its satellites, even to the time of the later illustrators, English water-colour, as it was employed from about 1760 for a hundred

years or more, may be safely studied by any student with a knowledge that benefit to his work will result. An investigation of the lives as well as the work of the artists whom posterity has rightly honoured will prove to be not without some measure of useful information, affording not only excellent reading, as set out by cultured biographers, but the finest tonic in periods of doubt and difficulty.

Water-colour is such a familiar medium in these days to both artist and public alike as doubtless often to suggest that it is not a difficult one. If this is really so it is to be regretted, because there is perhaps no more dexterous achievement than its really successful manipulation. And though for sketching it is not only the most popular medium, but the one in which the most effective and important work can be accomplished, the value of "quality" is only to be obtained by chance, or when the artist has complete mastery over his materials.

Some experiments in papers and the limitation of the palette is certainly essential before the student can set out with the assurance that, given a subject, he is more than likely to obtain a successful sketch. Also considerable practice seems always necessary before it is possible to overcome the tendency to work too dry. This tendency can only be overcome by practice and by each student realising for himself that to work too dry, without, in fact, mixing the paint with a liberal amount of water, is really to retard the achievement of those very qualities of transparency and gradation which are the particular virtues of the medium. For examples in flooding and broad rendering the student should look to the moderns, to the work of Mr. Lee-Hankey and to the popular water-colours of Mr. Russell Flint, also to the work of several architectural perspective draughtsmen, notably Mr. Cyril Farey and Mr. J. Harvey. But for experiments in the application of water-colour to various papers, and all manner of daring devices, he may turn back, with profit, to the older masters; to Girtin—for

instance—for rapidly suggested landscape vignetted and dashed in with a full brush in so bold and emancipated a manner as to make it difficult to realise that these sketches were executed when the medium was hardly out of its infancy, and the method of first laying a ground of indigo was one that he had practised and had first to discard; to De Wint, of whom it is said that “he drew and finished in colour only, so that his merest sketches have all the force and sometimes more than the force of his finished drawings”—he worked almost invariably on Old Creswick paper of an ivory tint, used in a well-saturated state; to David Cox for a method of interlacing lines rapidly applied with a full brush to rough wrapping paper, resulting in a style which appears careless but which is really most accomplished; to Bonington for his curiously individual device of superimposing broken washes over a ground tint, which is thus allowed to show through; to Henry Bright’s use of body-colour vignetted on tinted paper, adopted in so many attractive sketches; to Cotman’s manner of laying broad flat washes of palest tints which, when placing the darks, are left exposed to give passages of light or of overlapping washes of the same tint to suggest the irregularity of nearby surfaces.

To these and many other technical processes the student who would bend this wonderful medium to his own uses may turn his attention with certainty of reward, and thus go out to his sketching-ground with the confidence which comes of knowing that whatever he has to do he has a versatile technique at his command with which to do it; and that on the one hand the difficulties inherent in the nature of his materials will not defeat him, and—on the other—the possibilities which it holds are known to him, and may be brought into use for the achievement of his aims.

In studying the painting, and even the merest sketches of the old masters, a quality of dignity—what may even be termed a nobleness that they all in a measure possess,

arising principally, it would seem, from the unity of effect which is characteristic of them—is noticed, and one is almost inclined to suspect that they gave far greater attention to the scientific problems involved in the use of colour than is bestowed to-day; that some considerable knowledge of the theory of complementary colours, the exact results of combining primary colours, the mutual influence of colours and the great problems of Harmony and Contrast, was handed on from artist to pupil, and that matters regarding the employment of colour which are never given a thought by the average student of the present were once considered essentials of the painter's art. It appears that it is more by fortune than forethought, and by, so to speak, "stunting" in water-colour that much of the work of to-day is "brought off," and that those profound problems that are really involved when working in colour are thought of, if thought of at all, as something to be disregarded rather than studied. Colour employed with due consideration of its deep secrets and vast possibilities is a great work in itself. Ruskin's plain statement may be appropriately quoted here: "You may in the time which other vocations leave at your disposal produce finished, beautiful and masterly drawings in light and shade. But to colour well requires your life."

If the student would look to some of the most brilliant examples of sketching in this medium, he can always go again to the water-colour sketches of Sargent, of which Plate 45A and the Frontispiece have been selected as typical, and see that there is indeed no degree of confidence, dexterity and inspired vision which they do not evidence. He may go to Brangwyn's sketches in Sicily if he would assure himself that the carrying of only a few colours does not mean limitation, and is no impediment to the production of a masterpiece.

The development of a distinctive and individual technique is often pronounced the secret of success in Art,

and it is probable that this is in a great measure true. The technique of a picture constitutes, for some, the larger part of its interest, but it is the "poetry" of the subject which it is the artist's first business to express, while it is the qualities of character, feeling and decorativeness which will—in the long run—mark out his work for perpetual recognition, and make it appeal to the minds of those who, looking beyond mere subject, perceive the knowledge and the mastery of technical difficulties which the artist has displayed.

A factor which has, perhaps, in a greater measure—except in the case of the genius such as Turner or Rembrandt—contributed to the recognition of individual men is the association of their name with a certain character of subject, or more particularly with the scenery of certain districts. The name of John Crome, for example, can hardly be disassociated from his well-known picture of "Mousehold Heath," and other familiar spots in the neighbourhood of Norwich. In the opinion of Ruskin, Copley Fielding only became worthy of recognition as a great water-colourist when he revealed his incomparable ability to depict the Sussex Downs. It is impossible to think of Corot without associating him with a certain theme. Constable is of course a marked instance of a painter who, within a few miles of his own birthplace, found material sufficient to make him famous, and painted scenery with which he had become familiar in childhood, scenery the particular character of which is peculiar to a few square miles of obscure country. Mr. A. R. Smith, whose masterly sketch is illustrated on Plate 14, delights us each year with his water-colours of Yorkshire. The rendering of these pictures must be accompanied by the deepest emotion, so expressive are they of the very nature of the country which he has chosen to make his own, so suited is his technique to a true interpretation of the very essence of its character.

This fact the young artist may be well advised to take



SARGENT

A VENETIAN SCENE, SKETCHED IN WATER COLOUR



WATER COLOUR SKETCHES

(above) BY THOMAS COLLIER ;
(below) BY J. S. SARGENT

into consideration, and though his highest expression may never be reached by aiming at identifying his name with a certain kind of landscape or a certain kind of subject, he may, by experiment, find that his temperament is more in sympathy with one or the other, and latent powers may spring to life when the right one is discovered.

Water-colour being so facile a medium and demanding of an artist all that he has to give in the way of ability both to draw and to paint, its employment has led to the most varied display of individuality in method.

The illustration on Plate 60 is an instance of this. Our pleasure in the sketch, quite apart from the appeal made by the subject as handled by the artist, is in the remarkable mastery over the medium displayed, and in how by means of rare but fully developed technique a subject that might so easily be merely commonplace is presented as a poem. It is obviously a method of painting which, though it may appear easy, is extremely difficult, which when employed with success is unusually beautiful, but which when unsuccessful would be meaningless. To say that it is to be achieved by painting very wet, by flooding the whole sketch and by running in the colours and then controlling accidental effects, is perhaps only to glimpse some of the secrets of the method. The actual "knack" of so painting must remain elusive, being so intimately bound up with the artist's individuality as to remain indefinable. It is an instance of that power to express personal feeling which can only come of the constant practice of sketching and the unswerving pursuit of a definite aim.

The particular manner of painting in water-colour developed in the nineteenth century with such power by the Dutch artists Jacobus Maris and Anton Mauve is called to mind in considering this technique. Plate 50A, a fine sketch in drawing, in composition and in colour, is again equally characteristic of the artist. It would be impossible

not to recognise this as other than the work of Mr. Cecil King, not necessarily because his name is associated with marine subjects, but again because of a certain character indefinable but constant which marks his work.

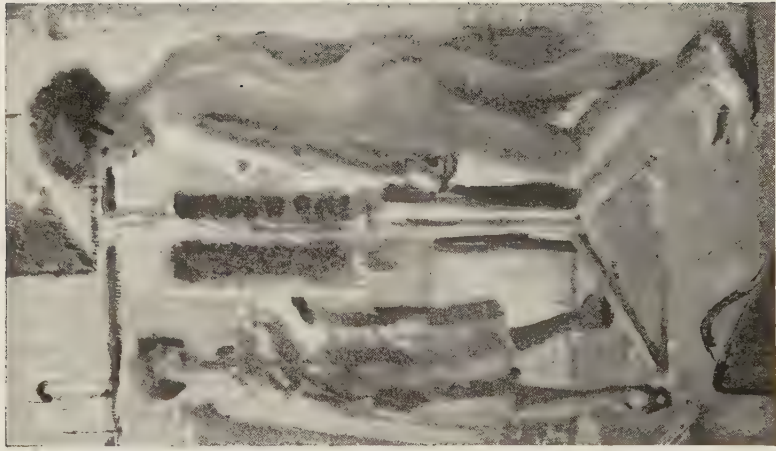
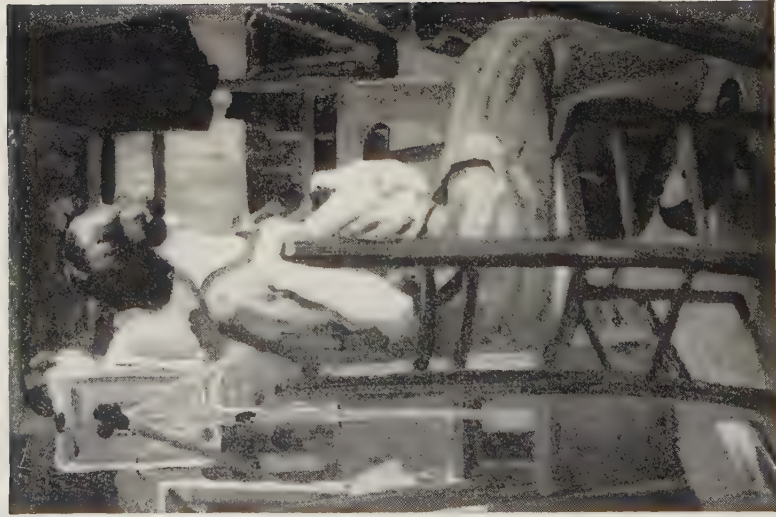
A point of special interest here is the admixture of a small amount of body colour with the transparent paints, which gives not only an opaque quality, but solidity and weight. To obtain this may be specially advantageous in a rapid sketch of a powerful subject. Much practice and judgment is, however, required, for though high lights of any tint may be superimposed on the darks, all colours mixed with body colour tend to dry out much lighter. The tonal scheme must therefore be arranged with due regard to this eventuality. The subject, "A Town on the Loire," Plate 9, illustrates yet a third example of departure from the more generally accepted manner of employing water-colour. The preliminary drawing and painting is reinforced with dextrous delineations in red on brown ink; a manner truly proper in this sphere of sketching.

DIRECT OIL-COLOUR

When sketching in colour, you are faced with the problem of doing a number of different things at the same time; with attempting to secure mass, tone, composition, unity of effect, colour, texture, something, in fact, of all the qualities which contribute to an ideal work of pictorial art. When this has to be done in the medium of water-colour, that is, in a rapid process of drying and changing in value, of separating, etc., it may oft-times be felt to be an almost insuperable task. The student may therefore on occasion be inclined to turn to the medium of oil-colour for the direct sketch. But a little practice in so doing will be required to reveal that any diffidence that has been felt in employing the giant among media to perform so comparatively light a task has been quite unwarranted. The need also



DIRECT OIL SKETCH MADE AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY SCHOOL
BY TENG H. CHIN



DIRECT OIL SKETCHES MADE AT THE ROYAL ACADEMY SCHOOL. (*Left* BY M. BROOKER; (*Right*) BY CLIFFORD HAIL



FRANK EMMANUEL

DIRECT LANDSCAPE SKETCH IN OIL COLOUR

for any precedent for this practice will soon be supplied, even if the student looks to artists who, at first thought, might not be suspected of having used oil-colour for this purpose.

For instance, artists of the Dutch School often produced sketches of arresting brilliance in this very medium, which in their finished pictures is employed with a degree of fineness and meticulous care which is unsurpassed. The direct sketches made in oil-colour by Constable are among the most remarkable little works to which the student may turn for inspiration, so expressive are they of the sheer joy of painting; and the many brilliant sketches by Sargent display his amazing prowess and ability to make even the tiniest canvas a thing of force and wonder. Reference should here be made to Plates 10, 44, 54, and the Frontispiece.

These achievements may be familiar, but to look around for further examples is to discover that both the early artists and men of the present day, who happen to be more generally acknowledged through their finished pictures in other media, have turned often to oil-colour for direct sketching. Plate 11 could not be surpassed by way of example. A gallery, indeed, of arresting little works expressive of that particular charm and spontaneity which is perhaps only to be attached to a sketch direct from Nature, might be gathered out of this one medium alone, and go far to voice that message which is the particular mission of pictorial art. (See also Plates 10 and 54.)

Even when employed for rapid picture building on quite a small scale, there is a permanent quality to be associated with oil-colour, which—quite apart from its technical adaptability for sketching—may to some strongly recommend it. That fleeting emotion which moves the artist to make a sketch may be felt to be more definitely secured if put down in the medium which above all others is least subject to destruction, to chance accident, to the effects of exposure to light, to the action of damp and so on, and

this alone may make its employment worth while. But it is in regard to the manner in which it differs from other media, and its particular advantages for the sketch, that we are mainly concerned here.

It must not be thought that the practice of sketching in oil-colour is one to be lightly taken up, or in which the way to produce satisfactory results is likely to be more rapidly arrived at than is the case with water-colour. Though during the actual process of sketching in oil-colour those particular technical difficulties which arise when handling liquid paint on paper may not be present, the actual impedimenta is considerably more bulky and the preparation beforehand demands much closer attention.

The materials, as in water-colour, should be of the best. A genius may produce a masterpiece with a burnt match, but the student cannot afford to be hampered by poor brushes and indifferent paints. And for oil-colour, particularly, these must be kept in condition. Knowledge of the several ways in which they are likely to deteriorate is particularly needful.

It is desirable when working in oil to give some time each day to conditioning the materials so that they may always be ready for immediate use, when the colours may be arranged on the palette so that those most needed will be handiest. The most convenient outfit is a box so arranged and fitted that it will contain everything, including a supply of sketching boards—either wood or mounted canvas—and contain in the lid slots for holding the boards. Thus when the box is placed on the knees and opened, the board is held in an upright position, while the bottom of the box with the various materials, separated in compartments, is immediately accessible. Such an outfit is the one which has been generally found most practical for the execution of oil work out of doors. These details must be considered, success in this medium depending on them. In the studio these matters can be otherwise arranged, but thought

bestowed upon the little problems of a sketching expedition is always repaid, and everything which tends to relieve annoyance from the intractability of the means adopted will help to ensure the achievement of the end the artist has in view.

Sir Alfred East, whose work in this medium is characterised by the conscientiousness and enthusiasm which were so marked in him as a man, sets out much admirable instruction in his book, *Landscape Painting in Oil Colour*, especially in regard to working on both a small and large scale direct in the open air. To this the student who may regard sketching in oil-colour as only a short prelude to the painting of large canvases out of doors, in the manner of the "Plein Air" school, should refer for many useful points of advice and direction. To others a close consideration of the methods and work of living artists who regard sketching in oil-colour a practice of general value and a joy in itself may be quite a revelation.

Examples of three different ways of going about the matter are illustrated by Plates 10, 50, 63. Plate 1, illustrating the work of Laura Knight, is a glorious example of a direct open-air sketch. Rendered in oil-colour, exhibiting experience and confidence in every brush stroke, this sketch stands as a model of sheer ability to select a subject involving a problem, the problem in this case being that of conveying a sense of full sunlight without including a vestige of sky, and of painting it without hesitation in the medium selected as being the most suited to achieve the purpose rapidly. Every square inch of this sketch exhibits that mastery over subject and technique which results in making each brush stroke contribute to the single effect which is the motive of the picture. In this respect alone it exhibits the very purpose of a sketch, viz. that of cultivating in the artist a power to control the subject and from the work of Nature produce a work of Art.

Mr. Frank Emanuel, whose versatility and wide know-

ledge of the use of all media enables him to employ one or other with equal facility, turns often from lead pencil, which he handles with such vigour, and finds direct sketching in oil a desirable alternative to overmuch sketching in black and white. Plate 48, chosen at random from many similar ones which he has produced, shows what may be done direct in the open air and without premeditation. It is unhampered by any burden of mannerism, limitation of palette or adherence to any specified technique. It is a two-to three-hour sketch, rendered entirely in oil-colour on a stiff board without preliminary drawing, and dictated in its treatment entirely by the demands of the subject.

The student would be wise in studying such work as this, for it may be rightly termed emancipated in that it is the result of all those branches of training and knowledge with which an artist should be familiar, each contributing subconsciously to the spontaneous production of what he sets himself to do, enabling him with comparatively little effort to, so to speak, "throw off" such sketches as this at will, and perhaps under conditions of weather which would make self-conscious striving and the employment of other media altogether impossible.

Plate 16, a remarkable sketch, the work of Sir H. Hughes Stanton, is full of a sense of the open air and the wonder of moving cloud forms and their vast shadows over the rolling and wooded country so typical of the Pas de Calais, where the sketch was produced. It is especially interesting in that it was prepared with a view to ultimate completion and refinement in the studio, a method favoured by this artist. Plate 16 illustrates the sketch after about three hours' work in the open, and, in so far as it is possible to appreciate a colour sketch when reproduced in monochrome, the student may learn much from a study of this fine example, especially from the mastery of the medium which is displayed and the uniformity of technique which gives such breadth to a subject which would fail entirely

if not so handled. Though the sketch is composed of sky and land in somewhat equal proportions, the great masses of cloud are rendered in so brave a way that they veritably seem to belong to the solid earth over which they pass, and the glimpse of distances suggesting infinite realms of country beyond adds a note of enchantment by being in contrast with the simplicity and more familiar character of the greater part of the picture.

Before concluding these observations on colour sketching it would seem an omission if some further stress were not laid on the importance to the student of acquiring at least some knowledge of the theory of colour before even attempting to sketch in the colour media. An appearance of unity which alone can give to a picture that sense of repose and completeness which makes it pleasing and satisfying whenever it may be viewed is only to be obtained in colour work through the application of the principles of colour distribution. A theme in the tertiary colours must obviously be more reposeful than one executed in the primary, and if the placing of brighter colours is essential, this must be done with due regard to colours which are complementary to each other. The preservation of any degree of unity of effect when vivid colours are introduced is only to be obtained by strong measures of counteraction or by overlaying each colour with one which is complementary to it. These and other matters of a more complex nature which pertain to colour must be, in a measure, observed if the employment of the colour media is to be relieved from becoming a mere jumble of distracting influences which detract from the composition, however noble this may be; while technique and brush-work, however accomplished, can do little to rectify what so offends the eye. In Nature the most startling facts in form as well as colour are always relieved by some manifestation which is equally reposeful, so that balance of effect is maintained, and what might

otherwise be sensational and eccentric is, at the most, only supernatural.

It may be said that a true eye for colour and for form, and the ability to depict these on paper or canvas, may suffice, and that knowledge and understanding of anatomy, perspective, composition and the theory of colour are superfluous when this is the case. But this is not so, nor does the history of Art support it. Apart from the need of these things in imaginative work, sooner or later the absence of this knowledge will be perceptible and pictorial problems will arise which will defeat the artist who is not well versed in all those matters upon which the practice of his art is based.

PEN AND INK

Sketches in pen and ink may always be said to possess the unique quality of appearing permanent and complete, of being, in fact, however slight, more than sketches. This may be because we are more familiar with sketches in this medium. We see them every day; they abound in magazines and illustrated papers, and though in the main merely sketches, we regard them as in a sense fully serving the purpose of illustrations. Their appearance when reproduced is almost identical with the appearance of the original. They often lose little, if anything, in the process, and the very quality of the medium once applied in even a sketchy manner suggests permanence and finality which is not altogether to be associated with other media so employed. This fact, in itself, may recommend "pen and ink" quite apart from its being a medium in which individuality and feeling may be more definitely rendered than in any other.

It must not be thought that what we term sketches in "pen and ink" are not always altogether sketches in the sense in which we are reviewing the subject in this book,

for the very nature of the medium makes it possible for a substructure of lead pencil, for instance, to be erased wherever it may subsequently show, and for all signs of any preliminary drawing to be altogether obliterated. The very fact of being able to first map out the whole subject in a medium that is removable without, in any appreciable manner, damaging the finished ink work may make it all the more possible to produce a very accomplished result in a purely sketchy manner. Many of the illustrations, etc., carried out with pen and ink may be the result of much preliminary searching with the pencil. On the other hand they may not; they may be directly sketched with the pen through sheer ability to calculate and to foresee, and be the result of untold practice in this medium. It is, of course, with this direct sketching in "pen and ink" that we are concerned here.

Long before the day of the fountain pen, and even ink in its present variety and quality, this medium was favoured for sketching. Rembrandt, a king among the masters of black and white, used it with singular force for the particular purpose of sketching. In fact, his sketches, a very typical example of which is shown on Plate 2, may be taken as models of that kind of simple and forceful rendering for which the medium is so admirably adapted, especially in respect of spontaneity and economy.

The call that the practice of sketching makes upon the need for accuracy and judgment is one of the very reasons why its employment for sketching is so desirable. A line once drawn is not easily erased, and in sketching the time required to do this is not to be considered. It is therefore the finest possible practice in gauging distance and proportion. Such sketches as that by Rubens (Plates 66B), even though in all probability produced without models, are the more wonderful in being in pen and ink than in a medium easily erased or adjusted; for they appear as trial sketches and entirely unpremeditated.

Turner's ability to sketch with accuracy direct in brown ink is only another instance of his unlimited talent. Even when his sketches in other media are supplemented with ink line, it is only to accentuate those very features which necessitate some measure at least of accuracy in spacing and delineation.

For a wealth of example in the use of pen and ink the student has to look but a very little way. The far-echoing call for work in this medium, so suited as it is for illustrations, so easily and inexpensively reproduced, found a wide and varied response, and among those who employed it appeared a number of giants whose sketches and drawings were a veritable entertainment in their day, and are no less a delight to us. Charles Keene's unrivalled spontaneity with the pen, Tenniel's sure manner, beyond criticism in its own style, as his immortal illustrations to *Alice in Wonderland* alone reveal to us, Sambourne's sturdy and positive manner, to mention but three, revealed the wonderful potentialities of pen work. To fail to peruse the pages of *Punch* for many a year back would be to omit the most prolific source of education the pen-and-ink artist could desire. Amidst this pageant of pen work the sketches of Phil May stand as supreme, at least in the matter of economy and directness of method. So surely do they impress the mind that illustration is hardly necessary, but even one selected as being specially illustrative of his style (see Fig. 1) exhibits the power of expression that is possible in even the simplest use of this medium.

The present, if not so rich in quality, is at least so in variety and quantity, though in one particular direction there are exponents who surpass many of the earlier men. Herbert Railton wrought magic with the pen, a curious magic of his own, realistic but entirely personal, but Griggs has given us a world of wonder not only imaginative but, what is more remarkable, the wonder that the artist can give to realism. His technique is intensely interesting, and



FIG. 1.—“GUTTERSNIPEs.”

By PHIL MAY.

in rendering foliage and architecture he has not been surpassed.

Mr. Sydney Jones also never fails to delight. His more usual manner of vignetting and of concentrating on certain tracts of his subject, while but suggesting the rest, brings much of his work into the category of sketching. The



FIG. 2.—A PEN AND INK SKETCH.

By SYDNEY R. JONES.

example here given in Fig. 2 is very pleasing, and illustrates the particular adaptability of the medium to topographical subjects.

The ability to draw the human figure really well seems indeed a rare talent, and few will dare it in ink in proportion to the many who tackle all manner of other subjects; but



THE LEFT-HAND SUBJECT SHOWS A PRELIMINARY PENCIL SKETCH
FOR THE FINISHED ETCHING SHOWN ON THE RIGHT

MARTIN HARDIE



that its infinite interest and subtlest problems can be portrayed and mastered in this medium, Mr. Baumer (see Figs. 3, 4 and 5), Mr. Pegram and many others are revealing every day, as also innumerable artists in America have shown us, notably Mr. Dana Gibson, who proves to what



FIG. 3.—PEN SKETCH.

By LEWIS BAUMER.

an amazing degree of dexterity figure-sketching in pen and ink may be carried.

In this medium the question of style is insistent. Every line tells, every mark adds something definite to the sum total of the sketch. In drawing the features of a face the slightest inclination of the pen may convey the expression required or something entirely different. Yet to appear accomplished the work must be rendered in a manner

which is uniform and equal. In fact, it seems more essential to "pen and ink" than to any other medium that a definite style is practised and developed in order that a sureness of touch, on which success so much depends, may, without hesitation, be at the artist's command.

A block of highly rolled white paper of heavy weight, made up in a similar manner to that in which Cartridge or Whatman blocks are made, is probably the most ideal surface on which to work in pen and ink. There is a real resiliency in this which helps every stroke. The more usual surface is a white Bristol Board. Tinted card is not desirable, especially if the work is for reproduction purposes.



FIG. 4.—PEN SKETCH.

By LEWIS BAUMER.

Just as a pencil must be chosen and cut to suit the idiosyncrasy of the artist, so a pen must be a matter of individual selection. A quill in the hands of an expert may be sufficient for any kind of rapid sketching, but certain styles are dependent entirely on the discovery of certain kinds of nibs. The boldness and wealth of line obtainable with a quill is not necessarily more appealing than the charm of very fine but very confident drawing with a stiff sharp point.

Of inks there are a number to choose from in these days when an artist has no need to look far for variety in materials, though the marvellous dexterity and equality of line to be seen in the work of the early pen-and-ink draughtsmen

suggests that the ordinary indian ink ground up to the degree required is entirely dependable, and is possible of employment with even a finely cut quill pen without any danger of flooding.

Two other illustrations not yet particularly referred to to illustrate this chapter. They are included to illustrate the use of the sketch in approaching etching. On Plate 49



FIG. 5.—PEN SKETCH.

By LEWIS BAUMER.

both the sketch and the etching ultimately made from it are the work of Mr. Martin Hardie, whose delightful and conscientious work in this field illustrates so admirably the value of the careful sketch. This also adds another purpose to the many for which lead pencil can be employed. The subtleties and delicacy which the artist has evidently

been so desirous to glean could not have been so rapidly recorded in any other medium. The triumph of the result is only another argument for the value of sketching as a means to fuller expression in other channels.

From these foregoing considerations, in so far as they



Old House on the Rue de la Manufacture, Reims, France.

1898/1899

FIG. 6.—ARCHITECTURAL PEN SKETCH.

By ROBERT MORLEY.

may seem helpful to the student, the several benefits to be derived from the practice of extensive and varied sketching in the several different media may come to be more definitely realised as a very real need in the early years of an artist's career, and as a practice never indeed to be altogether

relinquished or considered superfluous, however ambitious his aims.

This discovery may serve also to establish the fact that the vital sketch is an achievement of importance in itself; while to those in general who desire to attain to a deeper understanding and appreciation of pictorial art, this survey of the means and methods by which artists' inspirations and

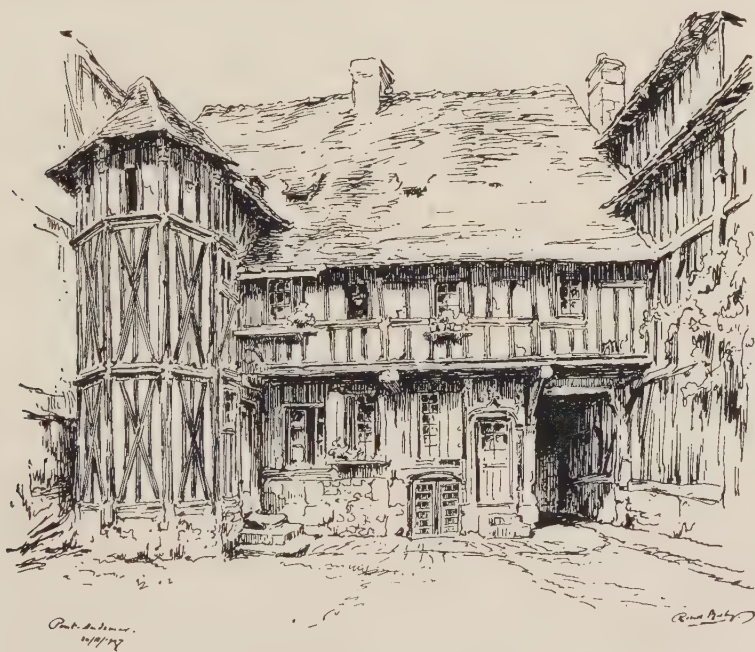


FIG. 7.—ARCHITECTURAL PEN SKETCH.

By ROBERT MORLEY.

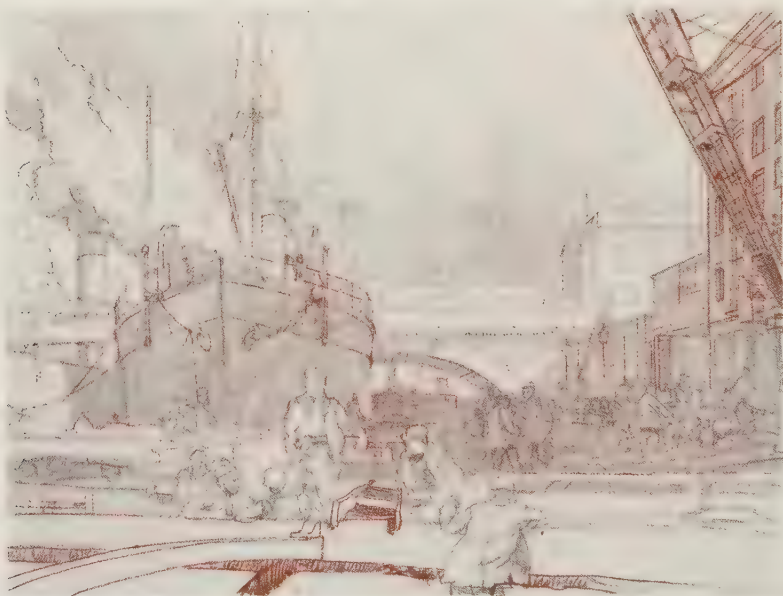
emotions are recorded and the greater matter of the finished picture is approached may—it is hoped—be found to have the virtue of being enlightening without being in any degree dogmatic.

That pictorial art must display spontaneity and style and be possible of expression in a wide variety of media is generally realised. But it may not be so commonly under-

stood that even the smallest sketch, if it be vital and accomplished, is, in itself, significant of the traditions, revelations and discoveries which are traceable back through generations of effort; effort directed to the attainment of a power which is instantaneous and unbounded in ability to see and to portray, and through the wonder of Nature to attain to the wonder of Art.



WATER COLOUR SKETCH BY CECIL KING



SKETCH IN COLOUR AND LINE BY FRANK BRANGWYN, R.A.

CHAPTER III

THE PRACTICE OF SKETCHING

BEFORE endeavouring to suggest some rules for the practice of sketching, it seems pertinent at this stage to define what is actually meant by the term "sketch," in order that the exact purpose of this book may not be misunderstood, and that the sketch may not be accounted at either more nor less than its true value.

The line of demarcation between the sketch and the finished picture is that the former is carried out entirely under the pressure of a single impulse. Completed, it stands or falls as the work of that impulse. It ceases to be a sketch altogether if subjected to further working up in the light of later consideration. To produce the perfect sketch, the artist must seize the creative impulse when it comes to him, work rapidly and vigorously while it is upon him, and consider his sketch as finished when the impulse is exhausted.

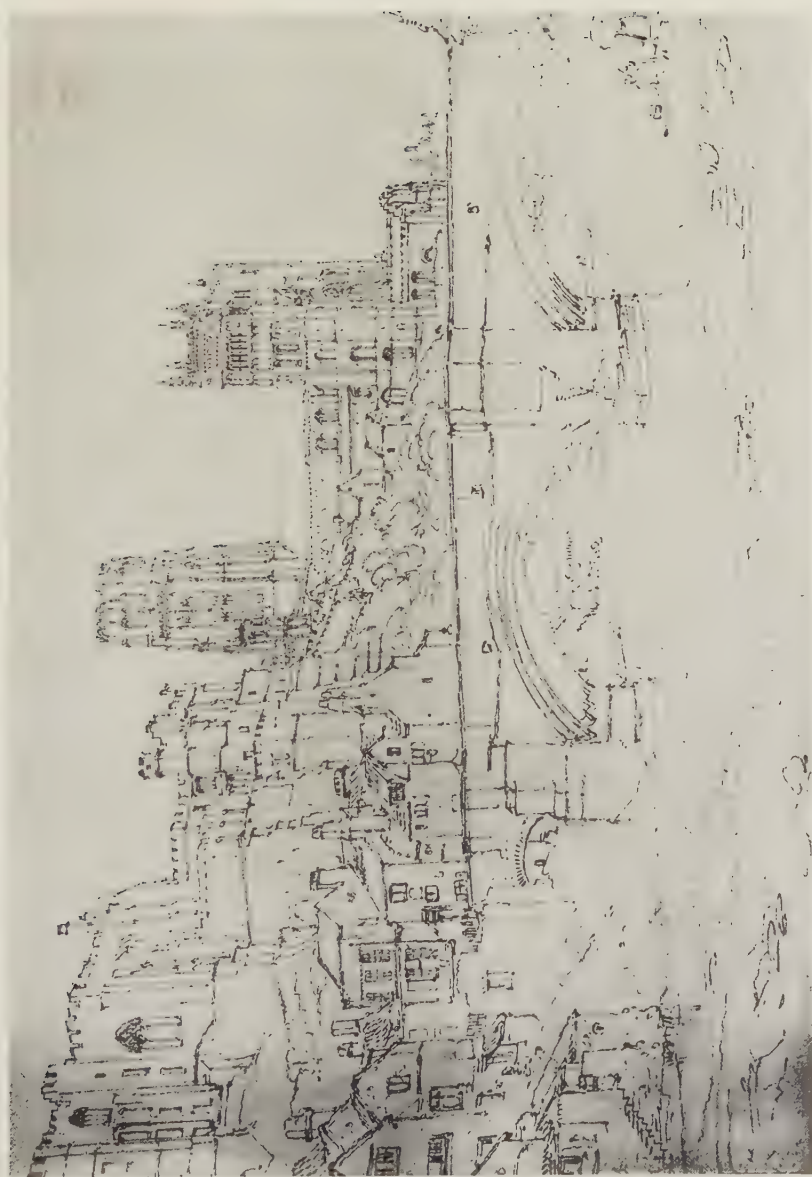
One of the chief essentials in the production of a good sketch is to cultivate the ability to gauge the moment at which to cease work; while possibly a still more helpful quality may be developed in perceiving how to extract from even a vast subject the elements of a small sketch, and thus be able to foresee the possible limit of effort necessary. The highly trained and enthusiastic artist may thus come to a point at which he is able to express himself almost as rapidly and spontaneously by sketching as by speech, so that the practice of making sketches becomes almost a second nature to him.

In this fascinating "language" of sketching may be perceived a delicacy, a subtlety of nuance, a charm that is

often not present in the laboriously finished drawing or painting. "Accident in the hands of an artist"—said Sir Joshua Reynolds, in one of his discourses before the Royal Academy—"who knows how to take the advantage of its hints, will often produce bold and capricious beauties of handling and facility such as he would not have thought of or ventured under the regular restraint of his hand. Works produced in the accidental manner will have the same free unrestrained air as the works of Nature, whose particular combinations seem to depend on accident."

A pitfall into which the enthusiastic beginner may easily land himself is the belief that, because sketching is in its very nature a simplified, vigorous, uncomplicated process, successful results will fall his way more easily in sketching than in the making of finished drawings, and a real familiarity with methods and media will be less necessary in the former than in the latter process. He must beware of such a fallacy. The student must also beware of putting such a belief into practice, lest it permanently spoil his technique through attempts at tricks and mannerisms before the simple fundamental exercises which are proper to each medium have been performed.

It is true that the *naïf* may, at times, have a certain wistful or amusing charm; true also that at times, by a sort of freak, the untrained child may "bring it off" where the trained artist fails. Prodigies appear from time to time, natural born artists who are little in need of lessons from their earliest years. But these are exceptions which do not prove the rule. The average, and even the highly talented, artist has usually to go through a hard and laborious grounding in the principles of his art before he can hope to produce those "bold and capricious beauties of handling and facility" which are the reward. Not only should the student serve a long apprenticeship in technique, but realise also the desirability of making a close and definite study of Nature. Albrecht Dürer urged that the artist should "watch Nature



TURNER

SKETCH IN PENCIL AND INK LINE



MÜLLER

A SKETCH IN WATER COLOUR FOR A COMPOSITION

attentively; direct yourself by her," he wrote, "and do not turn aside. Art is truly hidden in Nature. He who can find it there will possess it."

The student's study of Nature should actually take the form of making rapid notes, especially in the point media, for thus the subtleties which give rise to the passing aspects and infinite variety of Nature may be found to be possible of record even by line alone. Simplification of treatment and depiction may thus be arrived at from the commencement, and when the brush media are attempted there will be a greater tendency to work in a direct and broad way. Knowledge of the principles of design and composition is a common essential of both sketching and drawing. There are, of course, other matters, really sub-divisions of the above, which have to be recognised in the practice of sketching, such, for example, as perspective, the tonal scheme, harmony and rhythm. It is, however, here presumed that the student has acquired at least some understanding of these things, which indeed he may succeed in doing by a study of other volumes in this series alone.

It is, however, composition particularly—which really embodies all these other questions—with which the sketcher in practice must concern himself. It is the question of composition that will influence his sketch from the placing of the first line or brush stroke and determine even the final touch. However closely his early training may have been given to the study of individual objects, when sketching is embarked on, especially sketching out of doors, the vision must be concerned with the question not of individuality but of relativity. It would be an omission to proceed here without quoting some of the apt observations made by Mr. Cyril Pearce in the Preface of his book on *Composition* in this series:¹

"Out of the world of different forms the student must

¹ *Composition: an Introduction to the Principles of Pictorial Design*, by Cyril C. Pearce, R.B.A.

select the significant and relative forms. Out of the complexity of tones in Nature, out of the jigsaw puzzle of light and dark, must come the organised pattern. Within the amazing jazz of colours that is to be found in almost any environment must arise the orchestration that speaks of selectivity. It is in the attempt to reconcile the apparently irreconcilable that he engages in the task known as composition."

Composition is the quality which gives fusion and co-ordination to a sketch. The subject should be chosen as revealing in itself some elements of pleasing pattern. If possible a rhythm should be perceived, and in the successful sketch this should be expressed in the flow of line and blending of colour, thus achieving harmony. Above all, unity of effect must be aimed at. It is unity of effect that marks the work of the master. This is noticeable particularly in the oil sketches of Müller and Constable, in the monochromes of Claude Lorrain, in the chalk and charcoal sketches of the Dutch and Flemish masters, and in the fine pen work of some of the artists of recent times.

With these observations, broad and generalised as they are, observations the student really cannot afford to disregard, we will proceed—as far as this is possible without being didactic—to suggest certain rules and methods of procedure which may be deemed worthy of consideration in regard to the actual practice of sketching. These are now set forth under the five following headings, which, broadly speaking, may be said to include all branches of sketching:

1. Sketching interior subjects.
2. Figure sketching.
3. Sketching landscape.
4. Sketching seascape.
5. Sketching architecture.





SYDNEY R. JONES

RAPID SKETCH IN LEAD PENCIL FOR AN ETCHING

I. INTERIOR SUBJECTS

Sketching indoors, that is to say the sketching of interior subjects, will not at first give such encouraging results as sketching in the open. There are several reasons for this which it is as well to understand, for to understand one's work is not to be over-distressed by any negative qualities it may possess. For instance, a sketch made out of doors always appears more pleasing when seen within doors, whereas a sketch made within doors, where it is normally to be viewed, does not appear stronger by being taken into the open, but may, in fact, appear quite weak. It can never appear to better advantage than in the position in which it was made. Another reason is that within doors the choice of a subject, in other words the extent of the interior which is to be included in the sketch, is difficult of selection. The material being comparatively near at hand and the objects being intimate and possibly familiar, it is less easy to retain the scale of each in the sketch relative to their scale in reality—the reduction in size from reality to the sketch is so great. Also, though one is necessarily close to one's subject, this very fact really increases what to some is the difficulty of securing correct perspective and a true sense of recession in the planes which are farthest removed.

But apart from these difficulties connected with sketching indoors other facts are, perhaps, more easily approached than they are in the open. Colour and texture are plainly before the vision, and there is the added advantage of being able to arrange the source of light, or at least to control the lighting effect, in a manner best suited to bring out the characteristics of the subject. In fact, subjects may even be composed by the placing of objects in certain degrees of light and shade.

The average tone of interior subjects being very low, sketching in the point media must be quite a convention, it being difficult, by even the most vigorous pencil work for

instance, quickly to "build up" on the paper a depth of tone in any measure equal to the tone of the subject. The brush media are really much more suited to interior sketching of rooms or "still life." Rembrandt used bistre or other monochrome washes combined with suggestive ink delineation with the most interesting results for this purpose. The more common monochromes, such as sepia or Payne's grey, even mixed to one tint and superimposed to produce different tone values, can be used quite rapidly with remarkable effectiveness. No finer examples in the use of monochrome can be seen than in the little pictures produced by Miles Edmund Cotman, the son of the great water-colour painter. They are a revelation of the possibilities of this medium.

Though water-colour may be most often favoured, direct oil-colour is really, of all media, by far the most advantageous for interior sketching when colour is required. Water-colour does not dry sufficiently quickly indoors to make rapid sketching possible; also when the characteristics and detail of objects appear clearly, as they do in interiors, it is better to work in a medium in which there is less temptation to strive for subtleties at the expense of general massing and effect.

Oil-colour sketching tends to broaden the manner, and actually to assist the sketcher in keeping his work strong and simple in treatment. The depth of tone required to do justice to interiors is easily reached in oil-colour, and the placing of high lights, which will be found *relatively* much brighter indoors and which are so important in interior subjects, is possible in this medium as it really is in no other. Oil sketches of interiors have a peculiar charm. The problems here hinted at, which are connected with producing them, are well worth mastering. The secret is the same secret which is common to all pictorial art. It is that of gauging tone values and conveying them to the picture, except that in interior work the question of values is

especially important, there being less range of perspective to explain the placing of the objects in the composition, and no sky or masses of high tone to give solidity by contrast.

The whole subject of *still life* is really involved in any deeper consideration of interior sketching, but this would be beyond the range of these broad suggestions.

The introduction of the figure into interior subjects is, of course, really outside the widest scope of what may be termed sketching. The successful accomplishment of this is perhaps the highest attainment of pictorial art, but the rapid sketching of the figure alone, either costume or nude, is of course the most usual form of indoor sketching. In fact, figure sketching is generally thought of as being carried out indoors, but the student who is embarking upon a general study of pictorial art should pause to consider whether this practice of limiting the study of the figure to certain times and places is not a grave mistake.

2. FIGURE SKETCHING

Sketching the human figure, especially in the nude, is an invaluable practice that by some students of pictorial art is either neglected altogether, with the deepest regret in after years, or is practised in a far less systematic way than it should be. The human figure is really the basis of all pictorial art. The deepest emotions and the greatest appeal are possible of expression through the employment of the human form in its wonder and infinite possibility of pose and gesture, arrangement and facial expression. Even the true completion of pure landscape or seascape is often impossible without the introduction of a figure or figures, which may be the one factor needed to give scale and significance to the subject.

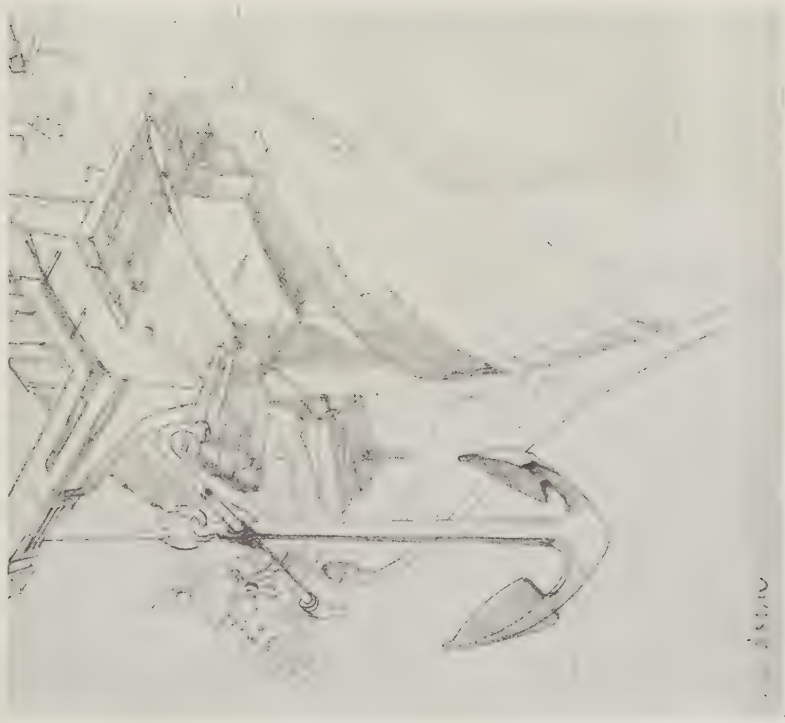
“Remember the value of the human figure in composition,” says Sir Alfred East in his delightful chapters of

advice on landscape painting; "its *weight* in the balance of your composition is out of all proportion to its size." And again—"Frequently I have composed a landscape without the introduction of a figure, and afterwards, for the sake of scale—for everything in art must be governed by the size of the human figure—it seemed appropriate to introduce one."

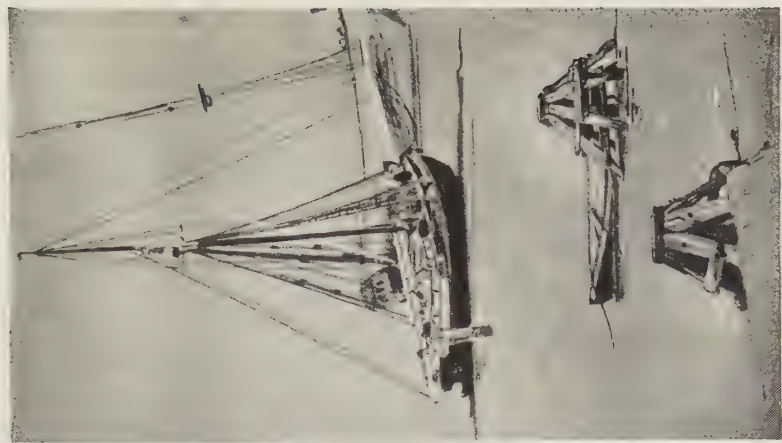
It is necessary, however, that if a figure is introduced into a sketch in even an impressionistic way, it should be well drawn. The eye of the beholder is attracted to the figure; also, the human figure being the most familiar of all objects, even the most uninitiated observer is capable of criticising its form and proportions. Therefore, to some extent at least, the sketching of the human figure as a separate exercise in itself is really an essential to the study of pictorial art.

As a winter occupation this may be practised indoors with advantage, especially the sketching of the figure in the nude with the point media—charcoal, lead pencil, or red chalk. The artist can hardly occupy his indoor hours in a more beneficial way, for by this practice the ability to judge proportion may be developed more surely than by any other practice. The kind of sketches the student should aim at are admirably illustrated by Plates 26, 27, 46, 47 and 65. The adding of drapery or costume to the same poses that have already been sketched in the nude would form lessons of particular value, while also giving opportunity for practice in the use of other media; as would also the introduction of white chalk or body colour, or even the rapid employment of brush media with or without colour, in such manners as are illustrated in several plates in Chapter II.

For the particular purposes of the sketcher, however, it is strongly urged that the figure should not be relegated, as it so often is, to separate indoor study only, but should be sketched in the open whenever and wherever this is possible; and, again, not sketched as an individual object,



(Left) Pencil Sketch by Seymour Haden.



(Right) Sketch for a Seascape in Pencil and White Chalk by J. D. Harding.



but in relationship to other objects, to backgrounds, and to other features of the subject. At any rate, in the actual practice of sketching in the open the introduction of figures should not be shirked. Instead, the appearance of figures on the scene should immediately be taken advantage of, especially when sketching in oil-colour, for these figures may be rapidly "blocked in," it being possible in this medium rapidly to record their relative size, tone value and other points of true relationship to the background and adjacent features of the subject as dealt with in the sketch.

The sketching of figures in movement in the "point" media will prove invaluable to the "black-and-white" artist and illustrator. The student in this regard may find himself possessed of the same *horreur de plume* that troubles the writer, but this must be overcome by just "going for" the matter until results become, as they will, so encouraging as to make this practice a particularly fascinating one. A street viewed from a café, or the lively scene of a bathing beach, offers endless material for rapid sketching. But perhaps the scene of building operations presents as good an opportunity as any for the sketching of figures in movement. The actions recurring and being often practically identically repeated, it can only be a question of time before accurate depiction is achieved.

3. LANDSCAPE SKETCHING

The sketching of landscape—the branch which is more favoured than any other—embraces a very wide range of subjects. A composite landscape may contain, in addition to "pure" landscape, perhaps a tract of sea; it may contain also boats, figures, cattle, architecture and so on, such as is the case in many of the greatest water-colours of Turner, or the paintings of Sir Alfred East, Sir Ernest Waterlow or Mr. Walter West, for example. But to attempt anything so inclusive or panoramic is really outside the scope of what

may be truly termed a sketch. Sketches might be made for the purpose of merely testing the possible compositions of such inclusive pictures or of particular features or groups of figures to be included in the larger work. But the great variety of interests which would be presented in a composite subject could not really be dealt with in any convincing way in a rapid sketch. Nor indeed should this be attempted in the early stages of sketching. The very act of viewing a vast and complex scene is awe-inspiring, and any endeavour in the early stages of sketching to render an impression of it on a small board or canvas would be not less than bewildering.

But a scene of even large extent, composed mainly of one interest, say of rolling wooded country, of fenland or of mountains, is, on the other hand, comparatively a simple matter. The eye is concerned with the recurrence of forms varying in trend, but fundamentally similar in character. The problem is one of attempting to depict the vastness of the scene on the smallness of the paper or canvas, not one of simplifying complexity. So that if the subject is chosen to include only a limited range of form, the *size* of the subject should not necessarily increase the problems of the sketch.

It seems, however, advisable to choose first landscape subjects of reasonable extent in which the main interest is centred certainly not further afield than the near middle distance; subjects, too, in which there is a particular feature of interest. In fact, this may be taken as definitely desirable in first sketching landscape, viz. that the feature of special interest which has led to the choice of a subject should be neither too near at hand nor too far removed. Plates 6, 8 and 58 may each be referred to here with great advantage as being typical of such subjects as might be attempted. The subject is a definite one in each case, and seen at the distance indicated was possible of being viewed fairly and squarely, so to speak. By taking up such a view-point the



THOMAS COLLIER

LANDSCAPE SKETCH IN WATER COLOUR



sketcher may feel the better that he is master of his subject, and that the success or failure of his work as a sketch is not the result of any embarrassment he has felt in being too near to objects comparatively huge in scale; or, on the other hand, that features of the landscape have been too indefinite and too far removed.

It may be that the medium he has selected is a difficult one in which to render the subject selected. It may be that his manner of employing that medium is at fault. It may be that the way he has composed the sketch is unhappy. Or, on the other hand, it may be that he feels that all has gone well, and that the sketch has "come off." But whatever he feels, the fact of the subject being one in which the main interest is placed at some reasonable distance enables him to judge his work as a straightforward sketch of a normally viewed and perfectly comprehensible set of facts.

Working thus from simplicity to greater problems, he may eventually develop the ability to marshal all his powers and knowledge in attempting subjects presenting far deeper considerations; also he may master that ultimate achievement in sketching, viz. that of making a quick decision as to how to transpose a scene of great extent and wide diversification, presenting features of interest on all three planes of foreground, middle distance and distance, and fusing the whole into the elements of a simple and rapid sketch. He may also acquire the power to make one or other of the interests in the subject the predominating interest in the sketch, and by the process of selection and tonal treatment learn to compose all into a definite homogeneous picture, by the general handling of his medium producing a sense of *equality*.

Plate 58 may be referred to as achieving this in a marked way in a simple subject, and Plate 16 in a wider view.

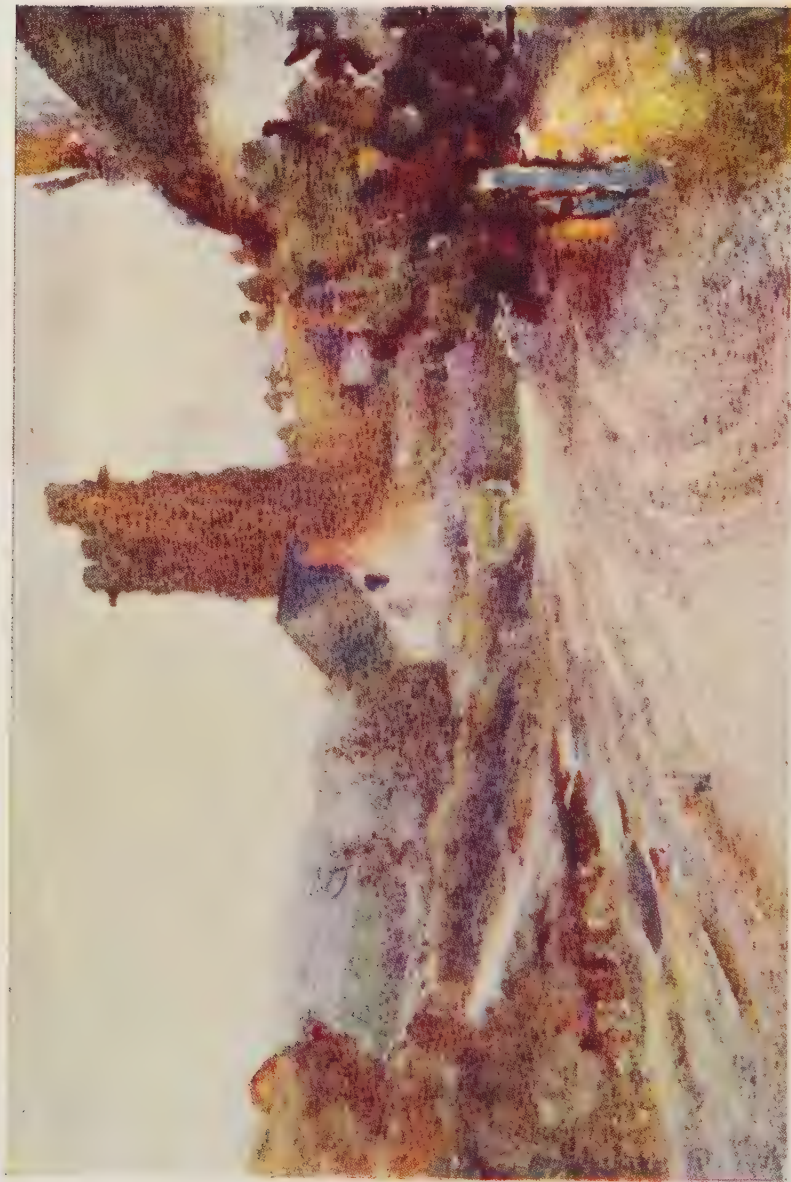
There may broadly be said to be two types of subject which the landscape sketcher particularly may aim at:

the sketch of a *place* or object, or the sketch of an *effect* (an effect of light, an effect of shadow, an effect of grandeur and so on, in which the features or topography of the subject are not of primary importance). In making sketches for topographical illustrations the objects, their form and character, are generally put first, *effect* being of quite secondary importance. But Mr. Griggs, for instance, has raised topographical illustration to such a high plane as to show us that both topographical accuracy and effect *may* be achieved in the one sketch. In pen and ink he has shown us that both may be worked for simultaneously without detriment to either in the process.

Sketches in the brush media, however, made for the particular purpose of recording an effect, suddenly noticed or particularly sought, form useful exercises for painting on a larger scale, just as they may also prove to be attractive in themselves as sketches. The study of the numerous sketches made by Constable of what may be termed "weather" effects cannot do else than prove a wonderful source of inspiration to the student.¹

To set out to seek a particular kind of subject may prove both a wearying and disheartening business if the sketcher starts with a too definitely conceived idea of what he requires. Something of infinite value may be seen in the first half-mile of a sketching expedition. It may, however, be but an *effect* in which no particular object of interest or appeal is visible. An effect perhaps of sunlight on tree-trunks; an effect of gloom in a shadowed quarry; a sky effect over a horizon of entire simplicity; an interior effect, glimpsed in passing the open door of a barn; merely some unusual and striking combination of light and shade on quite familiar objects which raises them to the height of interest and offers a little problem in painting. To stay awhile and endeavour to master this in a vigorous sketch may prove of immense value, and should nothing else be

¹ These may be seen in great variety at the Victoria and Albert Museum.



gleaned during the whole day, this alone will have made the expedition worth while.

M. Leon Bazagette, after viewing a collection of Constable's works, writes of his sketch-books as being "filled with the spoil of excursions." Such, indeed, should be the attitude which should animate the student. He should train himself to be at all times responsive to even the simplest and most unexpected revelation of the pictorial wonder of Nature and, when not tied to the limiting necessity of producing a sketch of some particular place or building, allow the chance effect to determine the subject of his sketch and thus, by his own individual response to some newly revealed beauty, weave into his work that individualism which must ever supersede the merely conventional, however accomplished and academic. Whatever you produce let it stand. Let a sketch remain what it is, merely a sketch. Müller, one of the most accomplished of all artists in the practice of sketching landscape, urged that it was ruin to alter a sketch; that it was almost, if not quite, impossible to do this without disastrous results. If the sketch has been "a fervid impression of the place, and its characteristics *put in* frankly, fearlessly and in the most direct manner possible, in so far as it endorses the above qualities it will be good."¹ What more can you ask of a sketch? There may be subtleties and a wealth of detail which, as you sit facing your subject, may tend to become insistent; but they must be resisted for the sake of general effect. To endeavour to introduce them will probably break up the breadth and harmony which you may have attained. In sketching aim always for *breadth* and simplicity in the treatment of form, in the tonal scheme and in colour.

It is more than probable that the student will turn again and again to pure landscape subjects for expression. The solid earth and its garment is a familiar environment, and even should we spend most of our days in town or city, the

¹ Sir Alfred East in *Landscape Sketching in Oil Colour*.

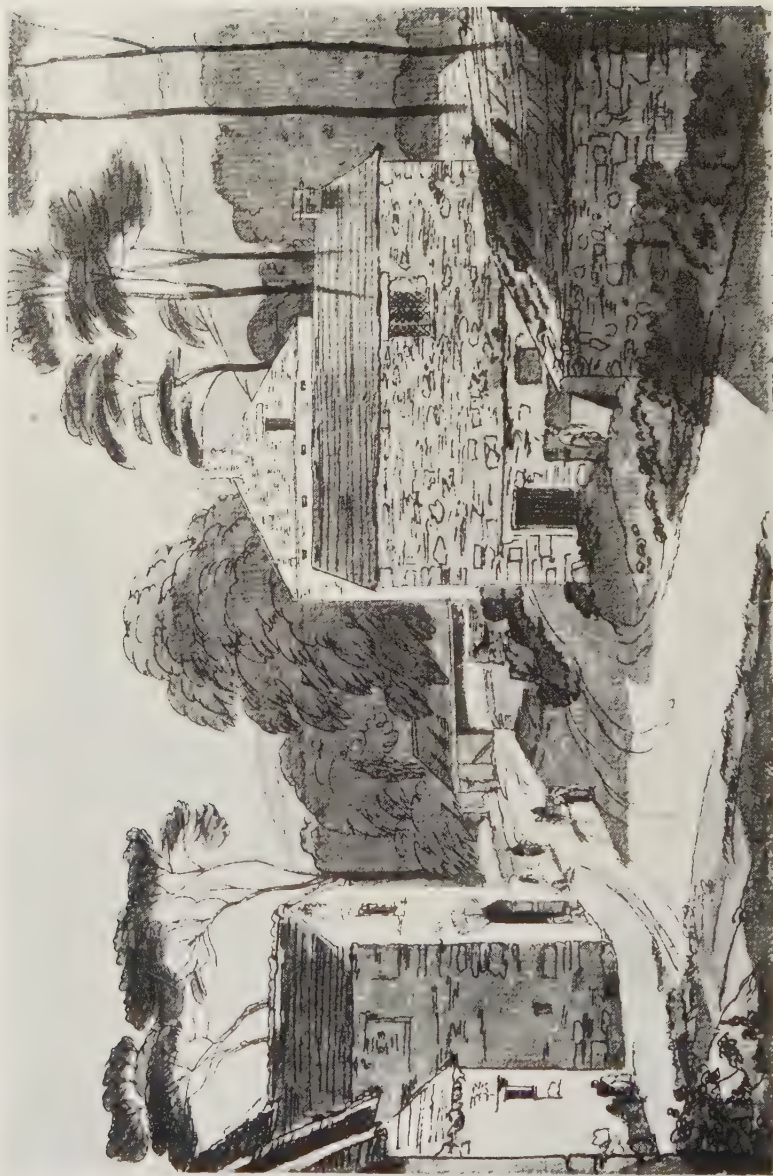
particular attractions of wild or gentle landscape, the peculiar appeal of rural scenes, or the uplifting sense of the wonder of landscape on the grand scale which has ever urged artists through all periods of pictorial art to the most intensive efforts of expression, will doubtless continue to recall the adventurers from purely imaginative flights of picture building, at least for periods of sketching and study.

4. SKETCHING SEASCAPE

Successful seascape sketching and all that pertains to it offer to the artist a definite set of practical problems which, after some experience, will probably be admitted as being even more acute than those which attend sketches of landscape. In the case of pure seascape, that is in subjects taken as being viewed at sea, a love of the sea as a definite phenomenon of Nature and of being on the sea is almost essential. Given this, however, the main fact to be thoroughly realised is that in the place of the solid earth is a liquid substance often wildly agitated, never quite still, and ever affected by the subtlest changes of the sky. Whereas in landscape the tonal scheme of the subject is influenced by the degree of light, in a seascape the smallest diminution or increase of light immediately produces quite noticeable differences in the appearance of the sea. Whereas also in landscape objects are, in the mass, stationary and devoid of movement, at sea, except under rare conditions of calm, everything is in movement. The sea itself will be presenting one or other of its several forms of movement. Only hours of observation can lead to sufficient understanding of these movements to draw or paint them with any degree of truthfulness. Besides, boats are moving, sails flapping, flags fluttering, gulls hover above the waves. It is this very quality of *movement* which, being the characteristic note of the scene, must in some measure at least be conveyed in



TWO WATER COLOUR SKETCHES OF VENICE. (*Above*) BY TURNER ;
(*below*) BY BRABAZON





SIR WILLIAM ORPEN, R.A.



TWO DIRECT SKETCHES IN OIL COLOUR



the sketch. The sketcher of seascape must pause to consider how this is to be accomplished. It is suggested that it is to be approached only by study, that is by the making of little drawings of individual facts concerning the form of things as they appear in movement, and that this must precede direct sketching of seascapes. Underlying a scene of changing form and light, it is possible to perceive a rhythm which conveys to the visual sense certain appearances of concerted movement. This, in turn, must be expressed in the picture in some measure at least, otherwise everything will appear stationary. It is this particular point which differentiates seascape from landscape. The very appearance of repose which is, in most cases, so desirable in the one is the very thing which must be avoided in the other. Also, no attempt to depict a rough sea can be in any degree pleasing unless the idea of tremendous force and movement has been conveyed by the correct placing of the wave formations in relation to each other. In Turner's well-known picture, "The Shipwreck," this feeling of force and movement has been quite definitely introduced.

The form taken by various kinds of sails under the influence of the wind is a subject which must be studied; in fact, the whole subject of the rig of boats should be considered. For these forms, though so clearly and definitely seen against the sky, are too complex and purposeful in every line to be convincingly "put in" in rapid sketching without pre-knowledge and understanding of the purpose of it all. Reference to Plates 20 and 21 will illustrate some of the various ways of sketching for seascape subjects.

These are some of the points which the sketcher of pure seascape must realise as being among those which have to be mastered if anything at all convincing is to be accomplished. For rapid work this subject can best be approached in oil-colour, a medium also which it is more suitable to work in under the rougher conditions of being at sea in a rowing or sailing boat, or when sketching from a barge.

But for making little drawings of rigging and the accessories, a knowledge of which is so necessary and the correct depiction of which is so telling in seascapes, one or other of the point media should be employed. Reference to the examples shown in Plates 56 and 57 will be found helpful.

In harbour subjects, which are more easily approachable, and which combine land with water and boats at anchor, there is a wealth of interest to attract the sketcher. Effects and compositions of rare and striking beauty may be discovered in and about harbours which offer endless subjects suited to almost any media. Few sketches more delightful in this sphere could be referred to than Mr. Cecil King's water-colour illustrated on Plate 51.

5. SKETCHING ARCHITECTURE

Sketching architecture, which to the student of art in general will mean the sketching of subjects in which a building or buildings predominate, has always been a subject which has called forth effort in every medium.

From the point of view of necessity in regard to topographical work, or from that of sheer practice in the art of sketching, there is little else, next to the study of the figure, from which the student will learn more, little from which he will derive greater satisfaction than the drawing or painting of architecture. It is also seldom that an architectural subject, worthy of a sketch, is not to be found within easy reach. It would also be a rare case in which a group of buildings does not present, at some time of day or under certain weather conditions, attraction as a subject.

The material for this branch of sketching is therefore always at hand. Also there is really no medium which does not lend itself to the depiction of architecture. Thus it is small wonder that so much has been done in this field. In such general observations as these there is really little more

that can be said than that the student, who may already be versed in a proper understanding of perspective, should work diligently for good results in a branch of sketching which will reward him in more ways than one.

There is, however, a certain aspect of the matter which is not so obvious, and that is that a sketch of a building may all too easily be merely prosaic. The necessary searching for form and perspective may be carried out at the expense of any general pictorial result. In other words, desire for detail and correct delineation may obscure breadth of vision. The charm of cast shadow from nearby objects which puts half the building in shade and leaves the rest in strong light, the introduction of a neighbouring tree, the placing of figures or vehicles giving scale, an unusual angle of view, these interests may all be left unrealised in the eager desire just to obtain a sketch of the subject. Yet it is in the very treatment of the subject that its particular characteristics may be emphasised. To some extent the very environment of the building may be suggested even though the sketch is only of one particular building. For instance, projecting features may be depicted in full light and recessed ones kept in shade. Or, when working in the point media particularly, some prominent feature may be selected for heavier and more detailed treatment and the rest merely suggested in lighter tones.¹ Early morning or evening light may be chosen to give solidity and simplicity to an architectural subject which, when viewed in broad daylight, appears disturbing and complex, and if so depicted may appear restless and flimsy. It is too easy to choose the obvious view and reduce to something that is less than commonplace a subject which, as the result of a little exercise of imagination and selective treatment, may be made not merely a record of a building, but a picture in itself, having all the qualities of a little work of art.

¹ A definite method of sketching architecture in Lead Pencil has been fully set forth in my book, *Sketching in Lead Pencil for Architects and Others*.

Among the plates distributed throughout the foregoing pages several sketches are illustrated which belong distinctly to the category "architectural," and though selected to illustrate also other aspects of the subject of this book, may be advantageously referred to in the light of their beauty as actual sketches in which the interest of buildings obviously dictated the choice of subject.

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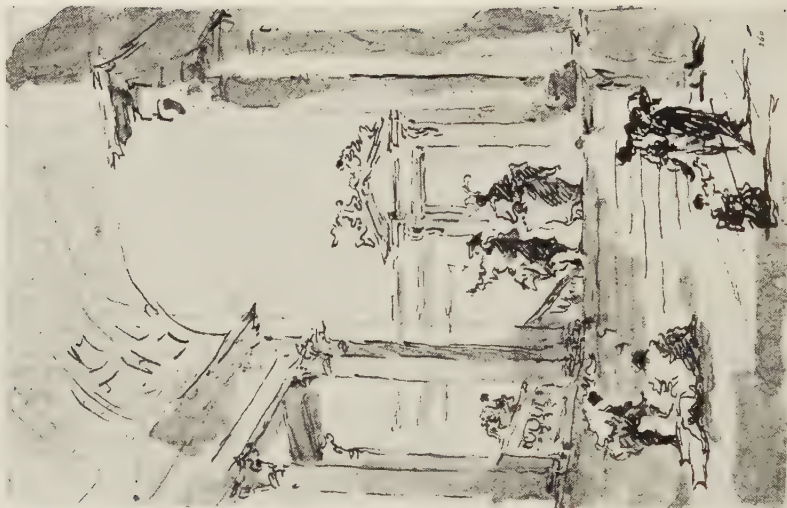
To conclude this discourse by any endeavour systematically to explain "how to produce a successful sketch" would be to contradict all that may have been gleaned from the foregoing pages. For to lay down definite rules and say that by accurately following them a good sketch must result would be to induce self-consciousness in the sketcher. It is self-consciousness more than sentimentality that really condemns so much of the pictorial work of the Victorian period. It is impossible to learn to be an artist by reading books on Art. Nor can works of Art be produced by any formula.

All knowledge regarding the production of pictorial art must become subconscious before it is really helpful. Knowledge which is ever present is merely a drag on the wheels of actual production and "chains of lead about its flight of fire." Once deeply absorbed it should aid automatically in the setting down of inspired conceptions. Yet with all the will and all the knowledge in the world there remains still the one vital need: *to have the gift*.



D. G. ROSSETTI

A PORTRAIT SKETCH IN LEAD PENCIL



CHAPTER IV

MATERIALS FOR SKETCHING

IN supplying these notes as an appendix to the foregoing survey of the art and practice of sketching, it is presumed that this book may be found to be somewhat in the nature of an introduction to pictorial art, and that on reading it many may even be encouraged to venture upon drawing and painting for the first time. Some information at least regarding materials is essential to the production of even the simplest sketches in any one of the various media, and at the risk of repeating what to the experienced may be common knowledge but nevertheless useful for reference, the following notes have been compiled.

Taking the media in the order in which they have been reviewed, we come first to Lead Pencil.

LEAD PENCIL

For the purpose of sketching, it is seldom that any but the softer leads are needed. Those of broad girth, made in the form of a carpenter's pencil but of better quality lead, will be found to be most suited to broad and rapid sketching in this medium. The use of these pencils, if handled boldly, will be found naturally to produce a technique in which broad massing can be contrasted with sharp outline.

The ordinary pencil of hexagonal shape and square lead may be preferred. These are, of course, obtainable in infinite variety. It seems best where expense is so slight always to purchase the best quality, as these can be depended on, being true to registration and free from grit. *Kob-i-nor*, *Royal Sovereign* and *Venus* are almost equally good.

Presuming that the shine produced by working lead pencil vigorously is not objected to, highly rolled paper of rather heavy weight is strongly recommended, such as *Chelsea Bond*, light-weight *Bristol Board* or even clay papers. In using paper several sheets may advantageously be pinned one over the other to a small board. Most may prefer a good quality, moderately heavy *Cartridge*, made up perhaps in blocks, and this is, of course, easily obtainable. As an alternative, a sketch-book made up of what is known as *Bank Paper* is useful for very rapid and slight notes. If a slight burr is desired, *Whatman* "not" pressed boards may be used for more elaborate work.

CARBON PENCIL

Carbon pencil is a useful medium, especially for figure sketching. It is very easy to employ and does not rub easily. It is made in ordinary circular pencil form and is soon worked to a point to suit the stroke desired. In its quality and colour carbon pencil is a half-way house to crayon or charcoal, in that its possibilities are more limited than ordinary lead pencil, yet it has not quite the crispness and blackness of the latter medium.

A sketch-book of *Bank Paper* is perhaps the most suitable. *Cartridge* of not too rough a grain is also recommended.

BLACK CONTÉ

Black conté is obtainable in ordinary pencil form. It is inclined to be gritty, but produces a fine black and is excellent for sketching on the rougher papers. It cannot be said to give such a fine gradation as carbon pencil.

CRAYON

Crayon is much favoured by artists for the more elaborate and detailed sketch, especially for the delineation of dis-

tances or for careful sketches of special features. But there is really not a great deal of difference to be perceived in using these black point media. The student must experiment, trying first one and then the other on the same sketch, and thus discovering the particular quality of each.

RED CHALK—SANGUINE

Red chalk is sold in sticks. It should be carefully selected, as it is often gritty, but when good is easily employed. It should be used in a port-crayon and cut with a very sharp knife. Its colour alone recommends it. For portrait sketching, also for mapping out trial compositions, there is nothing better.

Tones may be laid by rubbing as well as by hatching, and high lights "picked out" after with rubber. It can be safely trusted to hold without fixing.

WHITE CHALK

White chalk of a refined hard quality can be purchased in the same form and applied in the same way for the application of high lights to toned paper.

Cartridge or *Creswick* paper, "not" surface, is suitable, though some artists prefer smoother papers.

COLOURED CHALKS

Coloured chalks, perhaps more generally understood as coloured pencils, are purchasable in sets of six or ten or a dozen, enclosed in cedar wood and made up in the form of the ordinary pencil.

Conté and *Faber* supply as many as a hundred or more shades! But those made by *Arthur Johnson*—the "*Coloray*" series—or those known as "*Dixons*" are quite good for any purpose for which the medium may be needed in sketching, especially when used very subtly in combination with lead

pencil. The ordinary common blue pencil seems more workable than any other colour, and is not to be despised for a rapid note.

Heavy-weight rough Cartridge is particularly suitable, but even very smooth papers may be used if not greasy.

CHARCOAL

Charcoal needs careful selection. The medium is so specially suited to rapid sketching that grittiness is particularly annoying. It is known as vine charcoal, and is sold principally in two grades: *Fine twig* and *Large twig*. It is obtainable, however, in several different degrees.

For sketching, a medium degree of hardness is the most suitable. It should be cut with a very sharp knife. Short pieces may be used up in a port-crayon.

Charcoal must, of course, be fixed with gum shellac and spirits of wine. This is commonly known as "Fixatif," and is obtainable in small bottles and thus easily carried. It must be blown on with a spray diffuser, the sketch being placed at a distance of about eighteen inches from the mouth of the diffuser and turned slightly away from it, so that the spray tends rather to fall on the sketch than to be actually blown at it.

For roughly sketching a subject before commencing to paint in oil-colour, charcoal is, of course, invaluable.

Michallet, slightly cream, buff or grey in tint, and *Cartridge* of moderate roughness are the most suitable papers. A paper known as *Water-colour Wets* is also excellent.

PASTEL

Pastels are obtainable in three grades: *soft*, *hard* and *semi-hard*. The hard pastels are really not suitable for rapid sketching, even though they possess the advantage of not crumbling so easily or rubbing as the softer ones do.

Semi-hard will probably be found most suitable for general out-of-door work.

Pastels, of course, break very easily and should be carried arranged in padded slots in a flat box.

Fifteen or twenty colours of the artist's own selection will be found ample, though an immense range of pastels, each having a recognised name, and many of them issued in six or even eight tints are to be purchased. The best makes are *Le Franc's*, obtainable at Lechertier Barbe, Ltd., or *Giragnet's*. *Rowney's* are also good.

Pastels are generally sold in wood boxes containing twenty or fifty or even a hundred shades, but for the sketcher this will be found rather too bulky a way of carrying them. Pastel sketches are best left unfixed, and should therefore be carried in some way which avoids damage by rubbing.

Canson subtle tints, *David Cox* or *velvet pastel canvas* are suitable surfaces on which to sketch. Lechertier Barbe, Ltd., supply a very wide range of pastel papers. *Number seven paper* supplied by Messrs. Robson is also excellent for soft pastel work.

MONOCHROME

Indigo, Sepia and Bistre, Payne's Grey, Neutral tint, Lamp Black: these are the best tints for this purpose and in this order of merit. Indian ink diluted and even ordinary writing ink may be used. One sable brush of moderate size is sufficient.

Whatman stretched, Whatman boards "not" surface or white cartridge are all suitable as papers.

WATER-COLOUR

Opinions as to the best way of carrying the necessary materials for sketching in water-colour vary considerably,

and there is no doubt that each student must discover by experiment the one that best suits himself. A small waterproof satchel seems the most desirable, with two pockets—one for the paper, block and sketches, and one for colour-box, brushes, pencils, water-bottle, etc. Unless colours in pans, held in a small wooden box, are desired, the colours are best carried in the half-compartments of a small one-lid tin box, with thumb hole, and squeezed out fresh from tubes—eight or ten selected colours—before starting on a sketching expedition. The mixing space should be wiped clean.

Carry a generous supply of water, and pour this into a small jar sufficiently sturdy to allow the brush to be well washed without overturning it.

Two or three good quality sable brushes are sufficient.

These should be carried in a tin or celluloid cylinder with attached lid, one or two pencils, rubber of moderate hardness, a small sponge and a piece of linen rag.

Windsor and Newton's colours are dependable. For the beginner any well-known make will suffice.

If a water-colour block is to be used some sort of easel is almost essential, but if the paper is stretched on a small board a couple of inches larger on each side than the paper, and say not more than fourteen inches at most over all, the board may be quite conveniently held between the knees for the duration of a rapid sketch, and can thus be pitched at different angles. If a block is used in this way it brings the edge of the paper inconveniently near the legs.

Whatman, *Fabriano*, *Arnold*, "not" surface and fairly heavy in weight, also *Water-colour Wets*, are the most suitable papers for use. Quite good results are possible even on heavy Cartridge.

OIL-COLOUR

An outfit for sketching in oil-colour needs careful consideration if it is to be kept light and portable. The box

need be but a little larger than the over-all dimensions of the sketching-boards required, even 10 in. \times 8 in., accommodating, in slots in the lid, two or three boards about 9 in. \times 7 in., and a palette of the same size is quite useful. The depth, exclusive of lid, need not exceed $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. which will give ample room for even sizable tubes. These are best held in a tin tray, which can be lifted out and easily cleaned, and has a compartment at each end for oil, turpentine, etc.

The brushes must be reduced to $9\frac{1}{2}$ in. in length, but this will give sufficient counterbalance.

A good palette for general use may be made up of the following colours :

1. French Blue.
2. Emerald Green.
3. Brown Pink.
4. Indian Red.
5. Vermilion, Chinese.
6. Crimson Lake.
7. Lemon Yellow.
8. Burnt Umber.
9. Flake White.
10. Ivory Black.

This, however, will soon become a matter of personal selection. In actually purchasing materials the advice of any reliable artist-colourman may be taken.

The boards may be three-ply, may be used even without preparation, and can be cut up by the student with a fret-saw. If stretched canvas is preferred, this may, for convenience on a holiday, be carried in a roll, cut up and stretched on a frame as required, detached when the sketch is dry and rolled up; another length of canvas being stretched for the next day's work.

When sketching, the board or canvas can be held by some device against or within the open lid of the box, or a simple easel can be added to the outfit.

Canvas, grained prepared paper, pure flax canvas, English or French, wood boards (three-ply).

PEN AND INK

A block of smooth white paper and one or two fountain pens in good working order, carried in a small waterproof case, will suffice for pen-and-ink sketching.

Possibly a few "*Fabriano*" hot-pressed boards of small standard size.

A camp-stool of some kind is really a necessity in sketching, as more often than not the best composition is to be viewed from some open spot where no natural seat is available. Its weight should not be reduced at the expense of strength.

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